THE

OLD MANOR HOUSE.

A

NOVEL,

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH.

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOL. IV.

J'ai beaucoup souffert, j'ai vu souffrir d'avantage, que d'infortunés j'ai vu mourir! et moi, je les ai survecu.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. BELL, NO. 148, OXFORD-STREET.
MDCCXCIII.

THE OLD MANOR HOUSE.

CHAP. I.

IN a very few days after leaving this temporary ſettlement, Orlando arrived at Quebec.—He there found means to convince his Indian friend, that to permit him to go would be much more to his intereſt than to detain him.—But he was without money, and without clothes.—His Canadian acquaintance, however, perſuaded him that, on proper application to the Governor, he would be furniſhed with neceſſaries as a Britiſh officer:—and, after encountering a few difficulties of office, he had an opportunity of ſubmitting his ſituation to the then Governor; who being convinced, notwithſtanding his preſent ap-

pearance, that he was the person whom he described himself to be, gave orders for his being received and treated as an officer in the service of his Britannic Majesty. Orlando referred himself to his Excellency for orders.—He had now no longer a regiment to return to, as that to which he belonged was one of those that had surrendered at Saratoga—Though he was not actually among those who suffered there the humiliation of laying down their arms, having been sent away with dispatches two days before, he knew not how far he was included in their captivity, or might consider himself freed by it to serve in any other regiment, or to return to Europe.

The Governor advised him to proceed to New-York, there to receive the orders of the Commander in Chief of the British forces. A small vessel was preparing to sail in about a fortnight; and in this Orlando, once more restored to the appearance of an Englishman (though much changed by the hardships he had undergone, and by the loss of

his

his hair, which had been remarkably fine), embarked five weeks after his arrival at Quebec. He took leave of his Iroquois protector, with a thousand protestations of gratitude for all the services he had rendered him, and promised to remit him a present of such articles as were most acceptable, to Quebec, as soon as he returned to England, or arrived in any port where they could be obtained; and these promises he meant religiously to fulfil.

The vessel on board of which the luckless adventurer hoped to make his way to New York, was a small sloop sent with dispatches from the Governor of Quebec to the Commander in Chief; and the master, who knew the importance of his commission, took every precaution to secure the execution of it. But all were fruitless; for at some leagues distance from the mouth of the Delaware, he was seen and chased by two French frigates dispatched from the fleet of Count D'Estaing; and though he was an excel-

lent ſeaman, and his veſſel ſailed well, he found it impoſſible to eſcape.—His diſpatches, however, were thrown overboard; but the ſloop immediately ſurrendered to force which it would have been folly to have reſiſted, and Orlando was once more a priſoner.

His captivity was, however, much leſs terrible than that he had formerly ſuſtained. He received from the French officers all thoſe attentions which, among civilized nations, ought to ſoften the horrors of war. Nor was he ſorry to learn that the Fleur de Lys, in which he was, was to return to the fleet from which ſhe was detached, only for her laſt orders, and then to proceed to France.—The Chevalier de Stainville, who commanded her, made a point of teſtifying, by his behaviour to Orlando, his regard and reſpect for the Engliſh nation: diveſted, by the candour of his mind, and the ſtrength of his underſtanding, of all national prejudice, he conceived an eſteem for Orlando the moment he converſed with him; and agreed

moſt willingly to give him his parole as ſoon as he arrived in France (that he ſhould not ſerve during the preſent war, either againſt America or France), and to aſſiſt him in returning to England, which he thought no military engagement now prevented his doing with a perfect adherence to duty and propriety.

The Fleur de Lys, after receiving her diſpatches for the Court of Verſailles from Count D'Eſtaing, proceeded with a fair wind; and in ſix weeks Orlando ſaw himſelf once more on European ground. He landed at Breſt, and felt ſuch ſenſations as are only known to thoſe who, after having reſigned all hope of ever being reſtored again to their friends and their country, ſee themſelves almoſt within reach of all they hold dear upon earth. France, contraſted with his baniſhment in America, ſeemed to him to be part of his country, and in every Frenchman he ſaw, not a *natural* enemy, but a brother.

Had the Chevalier de Stainville been really ſo, he could not have behaved to

Orlando with more generoſity, or more kindneſs. He was himſelf under the neceſſity of going immediately to Paris:—but he placed his Engliſh friend in the houſe of a merchant, whom he commiſſioned to ſupply him with every thing he might want; and recommending him alſo to the protection of his ſecond captain while he remained in Breſt, this generous captor took leave with regret of his intereſting Engliſh priſoner—not, however, without procuring him a proper paſſport, giving him a certificate, and taking his parole. Orlando, eager and anxious as he was to return to his own country, had now a wiſh that went farther; it was to have an opportunity of renewing his acquaintance, and teſtifying his gratitude to this amiable officer.

He ſtaid only a few days after him at Breſt, when, taking from the merchant who was ordered to ſupply him, as much money as he ſuppoſed would be requiſite for his journey, he ſet out by the diligence for St. Malo. where, he

was told, he might perhaps get a conveyance to Jerſey or Guernſey. The name of thoſe iſlands brought afreſh into his mind all his fears concerning the fate of his ſiſter Iſabella: eighteen months had nearly elapſed ſince her departure with Warwick; and the mention made of her in Monimia's letter, dated in the following June, was the only intelligence he had received of her. Nor was this the ſole mournful recollection to which Orlando was ſubject in his journey—It was, alas! almoſt as long ſince he had received any information relating to the deſtiny of his Monimia. As to the ſituation of his family—Gracious Heaven! how many events might in that time have occurred, any one of which would embitter, with eternal regret, his return to his native country.

At St. Malo he could not find the conveyance he ſought, and therefore journeyed along the coaſt in as cheap a manner as he could to Havre; but, there being no open communication now be-

tween France and England, he found the accommodation he wanted extremely difficult to obtain, and it was not till almoſt the end of October that he found means to engage a large fiſhing-bark, which under that pretence was employed in ſmuggling on the coaſt, to land him at Southampton; and this bargain was made at the price of all the money he had, with a promiſe of a farther reward if he arrived ſafely at an Engliſh port, where he doubted not but that, upon making himſelf known, he ſhould find friends who would enable him to fulfil his promiſes. There was conſiderable hazard to his conductors in attempting to land at any port of Hampſhire, when ſo many veſſels lay at Portſmouth; an hazard on which they took care to inſiſt with great vehemence, after they had got their paſſenger on board. Orlando, who had infinitely rather have been landed on the coaſt of Suſſex, propoſed to them to make for ſome part of that country; but even this propoſal did not ſeem to pleaſe them,

them, and two of the three men appeared to be very furly and favage.

They agreed, however, to go up the Channel; and the wind, though very high, ferved them for the purpofe. It was already night when they adopted this refolution. With the dawn of morning Orlando faw the white cliffs for which his heart had fo long languifhed. It was, the Frenchmen told him, the back of the Ifle of Wight; and Orlando whofe impatience to touch Englifh ground was redoubled, entreated them there to put him on fhore; but this they refufed, as they alleged that their bark would there be in the moft imminent danger of being feen and feized by the veffels cruizing round the ifland; and their only way was to haul off the Englifh coaft, and affect to be fifhing. Orlando, fuppofing them practifed in thefe fort of deceptions, and having no remedy even if he had not approved of their plan, fubmitted to do whatever they thought fafeft

They kept, therefore, as near their own

coaſt as if they had intended landing there; but towards evening, the wind being ſtill ſtrong and favourable, they ſtretched away for the Suſſex coaſt, and Orlando ſaw the land where all his hopes repoſed!—He was little diſpoſed to diſpute with theſe men any terms they now wiſhed to impoſe upon him; but he began to think them very unreaſonable, when they told him that, as he muſt land at night, and on the open coaſt, he could not pay them the farther reward he had promiſed them on his getting ſafely on ſhore; and, therefore, they expect that he would make up to them that failure, by giving up part of his baggage. This was ſo little, after the caſual ſupplies he had received at Quebec and at Breſt, that, as he was now within a few miles of his home, it appeared to him no object. But if he had more tenaciouſly intended to preſerve his little wardrobe, it could not have been attempted without raſhneſs. He was alone, and unarmed, in the boat with three very ſtout fellows, who were anſwerable for his life

life to nobody, and who might, with ſafety to themſelves, have thrown him overboard. He yielded, therefore, to this robbery with as good a grace as he could; and at ſunſet, in a ſtormy evening at the beginning of November, he was ſet on ſhore between Shoreham and Worthing, with two pieces of twelve ſous in one pocket, which had eſcaped the rapacity of his piratical conductors, and a ſhirt in the other; his ſword, which he had got at Quebec, and which was returned to him immediately by De Stainville on his being captured, his high and romantic ſpirit might have been unwilling to ſurrender to thoſe rapacious wretches; but fortunately perhaps both for them and for himſelf, this his only weapon had ſlipt from under his arm as he was violently ſtaggered by a ſudden toſſing of the boat, and to the vexation of his guides, who meant to make it their prize, it fell overboard and was irrecoverably loſt. All the other articles of his little property, which they coveted, he granted them very readily:

with thefe petty acquifitions they hurried from the Englifh coaft, and were very foon out of fight. Orlando, who had waded through a heavy furf to the land, kiffed the beloved foil the moment he reached it; and was unconfcious that he was half drowned, and knew not where to lay his head. To be on Englifh ground, to be within a few miles of his native place, was happinefs he fo little expected ever to have enjoyed, that the tumult of his fpirits would not give him leave for fome time to think of any thing elfe. He was, however, fo breathlefs, and fo much agitated by his bodily exertion, and the various fenfations of his mind, that he fat down a moment to recollect and compofe himfelf.

It was not yet fo dark but that he knew nearly where he was; but it was neceffary to proceed along the fhore to fome town or village, where he might procure an horfe, on which he meant to haften inftantly to the Hall. The village of Worthing was the neareft to the place

where

where he wiſhed to be. He walked therefore along the ſands: but a ſtorm from the ſouth-weſt, which had been long threatening, now came on with ſuch violence that he took the firſt ſhelter he could find, in a little alehouſe built under the low cliffs, and ſerving as a receptacle for the inferior contraband trader, or thoſe of even a more humble deſcription.

A light, however, invited him into a place than which nothing could be more dreary and deſolate, and the group he found around a fire in a miſerable little room black with ſmoke, and filled with the fumes of tobacco and gin, did not contribute to give him a more favourable idea of this receptacle: but he had lived near ten months among the Iroquois; and evil is only by compariſon. He ſaw that his entrance very much diſturbed the people who were aſſembled here. Some took him for a Frenchman, and ſome for an Exciſeman; two beings extremely obnoxious, it ſeems, to ſome or other of theparty.

All

All agreed that he was a ſpy, and heartily wiſhed him away.

Orlando now ſpoke to the landlady, and begged of her to give him ſomething to eat; for he had fared very ill on board the fiſhing boat. To this, and to his requeſt that he might be allowed to dry his clothes by her fire, ſhe anſwered in a way which convinced Orlando ſhe doubted his power of paying for the accommodation he deſired. To remove an objection ſo natural, and ſo incontrovertible, he put his hand into his pocket, and produced two pieces, which the hoſteſs, not a novice in the value of French money, knew was hardly equal in amount to an Engliſh ſhilling. This (and Orlando had actually forgotten that it was all he poſſeſſed) was, however moderate, enough to pay for the coarſe repaſt he expected: but the woman ſeemed more diſcontent than before, and the people ſurveyed him with eyes more ſeverely ſcrutinizing; being convinced he was a French ſpy, or ſome perſon whoſe

 appearance

appearance there boded them no good: and theſe their ſuſpicions, now that they found he was poor, they very openly profeſſed; and the landlady, telling him "ſhe never took no French money, not ſhe—nor let folks bide in her houſe as ſhe know'd nothing of, becauſe as why? it made her liable to loſe her licenſe," deſired him to walk out: a requeſt with which, though the ſtorm continu·d with ſome violence, Orlando found it neceſſary to comply; and, fatigued as he was, determined to attempt finding his way through the darkneſs and the tempeſt to Shoreham, where he thought there muſt be ſome perſon who would believe his ſtory, and aſſiſt him for ſo ſhort a journey as he had to perform.

In this reſolution he ſet out to go back the way he came; but mortified that ſuch brutiſh inhoſpitality as what he had juſt experienced could exiſt in Britiſh boſoms, and lamenting that there were Engliſhmen leſs humane than the rude ſavages of the wilds of America.

Cold,

Cold, hungry, wet, and fatigued, he puſued his walk: it was ſoon ſo extremely dark that he could not diſtinguiſh the cliff, on which he was walking, from the beach over which it hung. The rain, driven by violence, almoſt blinded him, and the roaring of the wind and ſea deafened him. Hardly able to ſtand againſt the tempeſt, he frequently ſtopped, debating whether he had not better wait the return of morning before he attempted to proceed.

His impatience, however, to get to Rayland Hall, conquered every idea of preſent danger—and he went on, contending againſt the united oppoſition of darkneſs and ſtorm. After a walk of above a mile, he was nearly overcome with fatigue and cold, when lights, which he thought he diſtinguiſhed through the comfortleſs gloom, animated him to new exertions, and he went on.

His hope did not deceive him; but, in the eagerneſs to purſue it, he forgot the precaution with which he had walked before,

and fell headlong from the top to the bottom of the cliff, which fortunately for him was not at this place above ten or twelve feet deep, and he reached the bottom, without breaking any of his limbs, at the expence of some contusions. Recovering immediately from the surprize, he found himself able to walk; and kept along the cliff till he reached the town, which was not till between twelve and one.

It was then with some difficulty that he discovered a house of public entertainment; and when he did, it was with more difficulty still he obtained admittance. At length, after telling his story, which the man who heard it did not seem to believe, he was suffered to enter the kitchen of an abode between an inn and an alehouse; where some embers of fire were renewed, and where, though suspicion evidently appeared to be very unfavourable to him, the man who had let him in brought him some cold meat, beer and bread, none of it of a very promising appearance; but such as his hunger made

extremely welcome. This being appeafed, he enquired if he might have a bed, as he could go no farther that night. There either was no bed, or the perfon to whom he fpoke thought him a traveller whom it was unfafe to admit to one; for this man anfwered drily, that they made up no beds in that houfe; but that he might go into the ftable, where there was plenty of clean ftraw. There feemed to be no alternative, as the man objected to his propofal of fitting by the fire all night. To the ftable, therefore, the unhappy wanderer was led, and in his wet cloths threw himfelf down on the ftraw in one of the ftalls; where, in defpite of his uncomfortable fituation, extreme fatigue gave him up to fleep.

The noife of men entering to take care of their horfes awakened him at the early dawn of the morning; and awakened him to fuch a fenfe of pain, from the bruifes he had received, and the damp clothes in which he had lain, that it was with fome difficulty he was able to move

from

from his ſtraw into the kitchen, where had been the night before. Two ſailors were drinking there, who, having nothing elſe to do, began queſtioning the ſtranger. Orlando related in a few words his melancholy adventures, and ſaw that theſe honeſt fellows not only believed him, but pitied his diſtreſs, and wiſhed to contribute to his relief. His ſufferings were now ſo acute from the bruiſes received in his fall, that all his fortitude could not conceal them. One of his new friends went to get him "ſomething comfortable," which in his opinion was a large glaſs of ſpirits; while the other aſſiſted him in drying his clothes, which were ſtill wet; and as during this operation Orlando ſurveyed himſelf in a little looking-glaſs ſtuck againſt the wall, he found, in the appearance he made, ſome excuſe for the coldneſs of his reception the night before.

His face was covered with blood and dirt, for his noſe had bled from the fall; an old hat, which his pirate fiſhermen had

given

given him in place of a very good one they took, had been torn at the ſame time, and ſeemed only half a hat; his great coat was gone, and his coat was French; his waiſtcoat being the only part of his dreſs that was the ſame as he brought from Quebec. He had no buckles in his ſhoes, for the fiſhermen had deſired them; and his hair, which had not had time to grow long ſince his coiffure, was in the mode of the Iroquois, and now preſented what is called a ſhock head. Having amended his appearance as much as he could, he enquired if he could have an horſe? but he was told that none were let there, nor did they know of any to be had in the town. By this time ſeveral other men were aſſembled in the kitchen; and the ſame enquiry being renewed, one of them ſaid, that he could let him have a horſe for fifteen ſhillings: but then how was it to come back? and beſides, he muſt be paid for it upon the ſpot. This Orlando at once confeſſed his inability to do, and the *reaſon-*

able

able man who offered it made no farther attempt to accommodate him.

Orlando then determined to ſet out on foot. The very little money he had in his pocket was inſufficient to pay for even ſuch entertainment as he had had, and he propoſed leaving the ſhirt he had in his pocket as a pledge for the reſt, when the two honeſt ſeamen offered to diſcharge his reckoning between them, and even to lend him each a ſhilling to carry him homeward—an offer he without heſitation accepted; made a memorandum of their names, as he doubted not of having an immediate opportunity, not only of repaying them, but of returning their kindneſs fourfold; and then he ſet out on foot, notwithſtanding the pain he ſuffered, taking leave of the honeſt tars with many acknowledgments, and giving them his addreſs at Rayland-Hall. He was told that a ſtage would paſs along about eleven o'clock; which, if he did not miſs it by getting out of the high-road, would carry him ſome part of the ſeventeen or eighteen

miles

miles that was between him and the place where he wiſhed to be. This route was farther about; but he determined to purſue it, becauſe he found himſelf unable to walk with his uſual activity; nor could any leſs forcible inducement than the exceſſive impatience he felt to be at the Hall, have ſupported him in ſuch an undertaking, worn out as he was with the fatigue he had ſuſtained, and his limbs almoſt diſlocated by the injuries he had received the night before.

His progreſs was ſlow; and when at length the ſtage, by which he had been promiſed a conveyance part of the way, overtook him, he found it carried only ſo ſmall a part of his way that he had then ſeven miles to walk. He knew that by going over the downs, he could reach Rayland Hall by a nearer way than continuing along the turnpike high-road; and therefore, quitting the vehicle, he again proceeded on foot.

So little was he able to walk as he uſed to do, that as the days were now ſhort, it

it was almost dusk before he reached the top of an high chalky down—the same where, on his departure, he had taken a last look of the place that contained all that was dear to him—and he again beheld it, its antique grey towers rising among the fading woods; he distinguished the turret; and recollecting that so long a space had intervened since he left there the object so dear to his soul, and how many distressing circumstances might have occurred within that time to destroy all his happiness, he became breathless through excess of agitation, and was under the necessity of sitting down on the turf to recover himself.

Beyond the Hall, which was within a mile and a half of the foot of the hill, he distinguished the country round West Wolverton:—the house was concealed: but a wood, or rather shrubbery, on a rising ground behind it, and some part of the offices, were clearly discernible. With sensations of mingled dread and delight he surveyed the well known spot. "Dear paternal house," cried he, "in what a situation do

do I return to your aſylum!—but of how little conſequence is that if your beloved inhabitants are well!—Oh, my father! are you now thinking of your Orlando, unconſcious that he is within a few miles of you? The ſon whom you perhaps regret as dead is returning—a beggar indeed but not diſhonoured—to your arms, and to find in the boſom of his family ample conſolation for all his misfortunes."

When, in indulging theſe mixed ſenſations, Orlando had a little recovered his breath and his reſolution, he deſcended the hill; and was ſoon, by croſſing the neareſt way the few fields that intervened, at one of thoſe gates at Rayland park where there was no lodge. He found it locked; but there was a ſtile near it, and he was ſoon under thoſe well-known ſhades where he had paſſed the pleaſanteſt hours of his life. Every thing ſeemed juſt as it had been left about the park. With a heart almoſt throbbing through his boſom, he approached the houſe,

houſe, and wondered to ſee no ſervants round it; nor the dogs who were uſually running out on the approach of ſtrangers. All was mournfully ſilent; and moſt of the windows were ſhut. Certain of not being known, if he was unable to reſiſt the temptation he felt, to try the door of the lower turret—It was locked and he proceeded round the houſe to the ſtable-yard. There was no perſon to be ſeen where formerly there had been four or five ſervants: there was no appearance of horſes; no poultry pecking about; all was ſtill as death, and the graſs had grown up among the pavement. Orlando's heart ſunk within him; yet he knew not what to fear! the approach of the evening lent new gloom to the deſolate appearance of all that he beheld.

CHAP. II.

AN apprehenſion of the truth, vague as it was, was infinitely more terrible than any certainty. With trembling hands, and breathleſs fear, Orlando now attempted to open the great door of the paſſage that led to the kitchen and ſervants' hall; but this too was locked. He called aloud: his voice echoed round the old buildings that ſurrounded the court where he now ſtood; but no anſwer was returned. After waiting and repeating again and again the names of the ſervants who lived with Mrs. Rayland when he went away, he rapped at the doors, and then at the windows: the lower windows on this ſide of the houſe, having ſtrong iron bars, were not ſhut within. He looked through them into the ſervants' hall, and the

the paſſage leading to it; all was apparently deſerted and dark!

He could no longer doubt but that Mrs. Rayland was dead—But where was Moni mia? what was become of all her domeſtics? to whom did the manſion now belong, that it was thus forſaken? New horrors beſet him at every ſtep; but now, in a deſperate determination to know the worſt, or rather to indulge the mournful propenſity he had to traverſe theſe dreary rooms, and to viſit the turret, he went round to the other part of the houſe. He tried the chapel-door, which had ſo often befriended him in happier days; he found it broken, and off the hinges:—he entered the chapel, which appeared more ruinous and neglected than it uſed to be; he would have enquired if the remains of his benefactreſs ſlumbered in the vault beneath it, but no trace remained that could inform him:—he approached the door that led from the chapel to his former apartment, but that was ſtrongly faſtened on the inſide.

He then, while the only ſound he heard

was that of the owls from the neighbouring woods, or the night jar as it flitted before him near the houſe, again traverſed the park around it, and went to the oppoſite ſide, or principal front in the middle of which was the door of the great hall;—that too was faſtened; but over it was the achievement of Mrs. Rayland, the family-arms in a lozenge:—Mrs. Rayland then was undoubtedly no more.

Whither could the weary, the wretched Orlando go for information? and how ſad the information he muſt aſk! for it was but too certain that, if Mr. Somerive, or any part of his family, had poſſeſſed the Hall, it could not have been thus deſolate.

Orlando meditated a moment; if he could be ſaid to meditate, whoſe heart felt petrified by the ſhock. He recollected, that the old and long-deſerted ſummer-parlour near the library had a glaſs-door which opened into the park, and which was formerly left unlocked. He tried it: it was faſtened; but it was yet light enough for him to diſtinguiſh that the key was

in

in it, within. He broke a pane of the glaſs without heſitation, and, putting his hand through, unlocked the door, and entered this parlour.

Melancholy were the obſervations he made, as, by the little light he had, he traverſed this room. The wainſcot had fallen down, and the boards were rotted away: the ſtudy, of which the door was open, had only half its books left; and the tapeſtry hung in fragments from the walls. Orlando could not bear the cold chill that ſtruck on his heart. A low hollow guſt of wind ruſhed through the deſerted rooms: it ſeemed loaded with the groans of all he had ever loved, or revered—Yet he proceeded along the paſſage, which was quite dark—and, hardly knowing to what purpoſe, went through the great hall; and up the principal ſtair caſe—He entered the long north gallery, where, in the April days of their juvenile affection, he had nearly betrayed his innocent partiality for Monimia, by throwing the cricket-ball againſt the window.—Hideous ſpectres ſeemed to

beckon to him from the other end of it, and to menace him from the walls; though he knew that they were the portraits of his family in their black doublets, their armour, or their flowing night-gowns:—he ſtopped, however, in terror he was aſhamed of feeling, and, liſtening a moment, thought he heard a door ſhut in ſome diſtant part of the houſe—Were there then inhabitants? or was it only the wind which flung-to one of the doors he had left open?—He liſtened again; but all was ſtill, and he began to conſider what he ſhould do next.—Fatigued and worn out as he was, and almoſt incapable of going farther, he felt a momentary inclination to take poſſeſſion of a bed. He opened the door of one of the bed-chambers: the old high teſtered green ſilk bed looked like a mauſoleum—it ſeemed black, and Orlando could have fancied that the corpſe of Mrs. Rayland lay on it: the whole room appeared ſo damp that he reſigned his half-formed project, and returned into the gallery with an intention of going out of the houſe, and repairing to

ſome

ſome of the neighbouring cottages, when he heard again a door ſhut towards the kitchen, and thought he diſtinguiſhed a human voice.

He then went down a back ſtair-caſe acroſs the apartment where Mrs. Rayland generally ſat, and ſhuddering, as he now almoſt felt his way, he walked towards the kitchen. This was a room quite in the old-faſhioned Engliſh ſtyle; and ſuch as gave an immediate conviction, by the ſize of every utenſil, of old Engliſh hoſpitality. It was ſuch as Pope deſcribes in his letter to the Duke of Buckingham, where the peaſantry ſuppoſe the infernal ſpirits hold their ſabbath; but upon a ſtill larger ſcale.—As Orlando came near the door, he was convinced that he heard the murmuring ſound of ſome perſon ſpeaking as if in diſcontent. The door was not ſhut cloſe; he puſhed it gently open, and ſaw a female figure blowing the fire: he advanced towards her, and remarked, by the flaſhing light of the flame which roſe as ſhe blew, that ſhe was bent double with age, and in coarſe dreſs of the

lowest peasantry.—Instead of turning or speaking to him, she continued to mutter and mumble to herself, of which Orlando could distinguish no more than, "Why a plague did you not come sooner? about no good, I warrant ye . . . at this time o'night! and stalking about instead of helping . . ." Orlando now appeared before her, and spoke to her, enquiring for Mrs. Rayland; when the beldam, suddenly looking up, let fall the bellows, and, uttering a shriek or rather yell, hobbled towards the nearest door, crying out, "Thieves! murder! thieves!"

Orlando, following, attempted to pacify her: he assured her he was no thief, but the son of Mr. Somerive, the nearest relation of the late owner of that house, who was lately come from abroad, and did not know but what she had still owned it.—His voice seemed to have some effect in appeasing the fears of the old woman; but upon surveying him, they again returned—"You 'squire Somerive's son!" exclaimed she—"Will you persuade me of that? Didn't I know

'em

'em both?—Oh Lord! oh Lord! I ſhall be murder'd, that's for certain, and our Ralph's not come back—Oh! what ſhall I do?—what ſhall I do?" It was in vain Orlando renewed his proteſtations that he meant her no harm; ſhe continued to inſiſt on his leaving the houſe, and he remained reſolutely bent not to go till he had obtained ſome information as to whom it now belonged. The conteſt laſted ſome minutes, when at laſt an halloo was heard without, and the woman exclaimed, "Oh! thank the good Lord, there's our Ralph." She went out to the paſſage, opened the door, and a ſtout ſurly-looking clown followed her into the kitchen, to whom ſhe had related that a ſtrange man had got into the houſe, had been walking all about it, and now would not go out—"I thoſt, Lord help me! it was you; and there ſat I blowing the fire, and wondering what a dickins you could be prancing about up ſtairs for."

The ſturdy peaſant ſurveyed his new viſitor with evident marks of diſpleaſure,

 while

while Orlando told him who he was, and desired to know to whom Rayland Hall now belonged.

"I don't believe 'tis any business of yours," replied the churl, "and I'm sure you have nothing to do here; for, let it belong to who 'twill—'tis no place for travellers and wagabons—Come, master, troop! mother and I we be put in this here Hall to look ater it, and we can't not answer it to our employers to let in no strangers nor wayfaring people."

"I only ask," said Orlando, "who *are* your employers? surely you can have no objection to tell me that."—"Why, master archdeacon Hollybourn is *my* employer, then, if you must know; and this house and premises belongs now to our bishop and dean; and the archdeacon Hollybourn——"

"Good God! and how long has Mrs. Rayland been dead?"

"How long? Why eight months or there away—But, come, master, I've answered your question civilly, though I don't know

know no right you have got to aſk it, and now I deſire you to walk out; and I hope there's no more on you about the premiſes; for, if there is, I muſt carry you before the Juſtice—and ſo, look'e, I've got a gun here" (and he reached one down from over the chimney) "that will do more ſarvis in caſe of need beſides hitting a rook."

Orlando, unarmed and defenceleſs as he was, and finding no ſucceſs in his attempts to gain credit, was now compelled to leave this once hoſpitable manſion, where he had formerly been encouraged to dream of paſſing in it the noon of his life with his beloved Monimia—after whom, or her aunt Lennard, he had enquired fruitleſsly. With deſpair in his heart he left the houſe (not however for the laſt time, though it was now the property of the good biſhop and his dean and chapter), being determined to return the next day, for the mournful delight of ſurveying the apartment of Monimia, where he almoſt wiſhed to expire. Yet he had hardly given way a moment to this unmanly deſpondence,

than he was aſhamed of it: his father and his family were yet ready to receive him, and he quickened his pace through the gloom; for it was now quite dark, and a ſtrong ſouth-weſt wind brought on a heavy driving rain.

How very mournful were the reflections of Orlando as he followed the well-known foot-path to Weſt-Wolverton!—How different was his ſituation from that he fondly thought to have been in when he laſt took a reluctant leave, in this very path, of his Monimia!—Accuſtomed to aſſociate poetry with all his ideas, his preſent condition, oppoſed to that which his ſanguine imagination had flattered him with, brought to his mind that ſublime ode, "the Bard" of Gray,

"Fair laughs the morn, and ſoft the zephyr blows;
"While proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
"In gallant trim the gilded veſſel goes,
"Youth on the prow, and pleaſure at the helm;
"Regardleſs of the ſweeping whirlwind's ſway,
"That, huſh'd in grim repoſe, expects his evening
"prey."

In ſuch mournful meditations, and by dint of habit, or rather of his perfect recol-

 lection

lection of every shrub and tree about the place, so that he could have found his way even had it been darker than it was, Orlando reached the upper plantation, and descended on the other side, the almost perpendicular path that led down over the pond head. The roar of the water, which murmured hollow in the blasts of wind, and the sullen noise of the mill, well-known sounds which Orlando had so often listened to, brought back, in all their force, the recollection of the evening walks he used to have from Wolverton to the Hall to visit his Monimia. He went over the foot-bridge that arched the cascade now swollen with the rain, and entered the old fir-grove, where he fancied, in some former fits of despondence, that he heard, in every hollow wind, "Orlando will revisit this place no more!" Yet he did revisit it; but how? How fallen from all those dreams of happiness that had so often flattered him, and, in contradiction to this gloomy impression of his pensive moments, had

had ſaid—"Orlando will be the maſter of theſe ſcenes!"

Yet, if he found his father living and rejoiced at his return—if he once more felt the maternal tear of his beloved mother wet his cheek—if his ſiſters were well—if news had been received of Iſabella—and if Selina, as he fondly hoped, could give him certain intelligence where he might fly to Monimia, all would be well; and, though he ſhould regret his kind benefactreſs, regret the ſevere diſappointment to his family, there was yet happineſs, much happineſs, to be hoped for.

It was ſo perfectly dark within the wood, that Orlando, not being able with all his knowledge of the place to find his path, went out to the edge of it, and continued his way along the pond ſide. He ſaw a light glimmering at a diſtance upon the water, which he perceived was reflected from the mill. The ſtorm becoming more violent, he détermined to go thither. The miller was one of Mrs. Rayland's tenants, who had not long before Orlando's departure

ture for America granted him a very great favour in regard to the renewal of his leafe, in confequence of Orlando's interceffion. From this man, therefore, he doubted not of an hofpitable reception, and the information relative to Mrs. Rayland which at the Hall he had been denied.

He foon arrived; and, with a fhort ftick he carried with him, rapped loudly at the door. A woman foon after looked out of the window from whence the light had proceeded, and enquired in apparent alarm, "Who is there?"

Orlando anfwered, "Is it Mrs. Whitly who fpeaks?"

"Mrs. Whitly, friend!" replied the female voice: "Lord! I cannot think what you want here at this time o'night; why, mafter's a-bed, and the men folk too—I'm fure I wifh you'd go about your bufinefs."

"My bufinefs," faid Orlando, "is with Mr. Whitly—Tell him it is Orlando Somerive, his old friend."

The woman then retired from the window

dow as if to ſpeak to ſomebody, and, preſently returning, cried, "Maſter ſays how he knows no ſuch perſon—Young 'ſquire Orlando is dead a long while ago in parts beyond ſea; and you muſt be a impoſtor—for 'tis well known the young man's not alive, and all his family were in mourning for un before they went out of this country."

The woman would then have ſhut the window; but Orlando, rendered half frantic by her laſt expreſſion, conjured her with ſo much vehemence to hear him, that ſhe delayed it a moment.—He implored her to tell him what ſhe meant by ſaying that the Somerive family had left the country.—"Why, 'tis plain," anſwered ſhe, "that you don't belong to none of them—for, if you did, you'd know that the old 'ſquire have been dead ever ſo long—a matter of two or three months before old Madam at the Hall; and that the young one, he as was always ſo wild like, have ſold the houſe and farms and all to the

great

great 'ſquire at the caſtle, and that the reſt on 'em have left the country."

Orlando could hear no more—his fortitude and his ſenſes forſook him together—and weakneſs, from fatigue and want of food, diſabled him from reſiſting any longer theſe repeated and overwhelming ſtrokes of affliction—He ſtaggered a few paces, and fell againſt the door of the houſe.

The woman, who perceived him by the light of the candle from the caſement, began to think he muſt be, in ſome way or other, intereſted for the Somerive family, ſince he was thus affected; and, communicating his ſituation to her huſband, who was in bed in the room from the window of which ſhe had ſpoken, the miller, not without ſome grumbling and ſwearing, got up, and, looking out, ſaw Orlando lying on the ground, and apparently inſenſible. He then feared that he might "get into trouble," to uſe the expreſſion of the country, if a man was found dead at his door, without his having aſſiſted him; and calculating, rather than yielding to the impulſe.

pulſe of humanity, he ordered his wife to go call up one of the men, and go down with him to ſee what was the matter with the fellow; and, if he was only drunk, or ſick, to give him a dram, and to haul him away to a hovel full of ſtraw in the yard—all which he thought leſs trouble than might be given him by the Coroner's Inqueſt, if the man ſhould be found dead at his door in the morning.

His wife obeyed—and, taking a ſervant man with her, who had lived many years at the mill, they opened the door.—Orlando was inſenſible, and the man pronounced him dead;—but had not half a ſecond held the candle to his face, before he exclaimed with a great oath, that it was either Orlando Somerive, or his ghoſt! That it was not his ghoſt, but himſelf, though ſadly changed both in countenance and appearance, the miller's man was convinced, when Orlando, awakened from his trance by being moved, opened his eyes, while with a deep ſigh, and wildly ſtaring about him, he wrung the man's hand, and

conjured

conjured him, in incoherent terms, to tell him if it was true that his father was dead, and all his family dispersed—or if it were only a hideous dream.

The old man, who had known him from his infancy, was moved by the melancholy situation in which he saw him; and, helping him into the house, put him into a chair, and made him swallow some coarse kind of spirits—Orlando submitting to receive his assistance, but still passionately imploring him to say if what he fancied he had heard was real, while the man with tears in his eyes continued silent. By this time, however, the miller himself, Mr. Whitly, having been assured by his wife of Orlando's identity, came down; and Orlando renewing to him his eager adjurations, he began a long consolatory discourse, in which he attempted to prove that, as every body must die, none should be immeasurably grieved when an event so common happened to their friends.

Orlando with glazed eyes and contracted brows appeared to listen to his discourse; but,

but, in fact, heard not a word of it beyond those that confirmed his misfortune. With wildness in his voice and manner, he now desired to go to the house that was his father's, to go to the parish-church where he was buried. He demanded eagerly where his mother was? where were his sisters? His host answered, that they had been gone a long time to London; and that as to talking of going to West Wolverton house or such-like, or for to go for to think of going into the church at such a time, why it was quite out of reason; but he advised him to go to bed where he was for that night, saying very coldly (which coldness Orlando did not however remark), that he was welcome to a spare bed they had for one night or so; and the old servant plying him with spirits as liberally as his master did with advice, and believing his remedy the most efficacious of the two, fatigue and weakness soon overcome by the power of this application, he suffered himself, almost in a state of insensibility, to be led to a room where was a bed,

on

on which, without taking off his clothes, he threw himſelf, and forgot a little while all his ſorrows.

Alas! they recurred in the morning with ſeverer poignancy.—He did not, on his firſt recovering his ſenſes, recollect where he was, and ſtared wildly around him; but too ſoon the ſad remembrance of his irreparable calamities ruſhed upon him, and he had need of all his reaſon and all his fortitude to enable him to bear this terrible conviction like a man. He went down ſtairs, determined to viſit Weſt Wolverton and the church, and then to ſet out for London; but he had only eighteen-pence in his pocket, the remainder of what the ſailors had lent him at Shoreham, and his clothes were ſuch as would prevent him from obtaining credit on the road. He hoped that at the neighbouring town he might, when he was known, obtain credit for ſuch an equipment as would prevent his terrifying his family by his appearance; and, perhaps, a ſmall ſupply of money from Mr. Whitly, to whom, as ſoon as he

he ſaw him, he opened without heſitation the reduced ſtate of his finances, and deſired he would lend him a guinea or two to bear his expences to London. This man, who was grown very rich by the excellent bargain he held under Mrs. Rayland, and by being a great proficient in the ſecrets of his trade, had, like many other rich men, an invincible averſion to the poor, or to any who might be accidentally reduced to the neceſſity of borrowing; and to Orlando, coming under both theſe deſcriptions, he gradually became more and more reſerved as his preſent ſituation was explained; and when he ended by deſiring a temporary aſſiſtance, the miller, with a ſagacious look, replied, that he was very ſorry, to be ſure, that things were as they were—"For my part," ſaid he, "I have a family of my own; nevertheleſs, I'm ſure I would do a kind thing by a neighbour's ſon as ſoon as another—But the thing is this—Here's a will, d'ye ſee, of old Madam's, dated a good many years ago, which gives all her landed property

to

to the biſhop of this here dioceſe, his dean and-chapter for purpoſes therein mentioned, and then legacies"—Orlándo would here have interrupted him with queſtions; but the affluent Miller, opining, like moſt other affluent men, that a borrower ought to have no ſentiments of his own, waved his hand to ſilence him, and continued—"Well, well, but hear me out, and then I'll hear you—I ſay, that being the caſe, why the will is diſputed; becauſe as why? Your brot er Phill, d'ye ſee, ſays he's heir at law, and ſo there's a Chancery law-ſuit about it—But we knows that a will's a will, and the longeſt purſe will carry the day.—Well! the upſhot of all is, that heir at law, or not heir at law, your brother, if he can carry on the ſuit, which folks be pretty dubous about, will never get no part of it."—"And, therefore," ſaid Orlando ſharply, "you will not lend me what I aſked?—It is well—I wiſh you a good morning, and deſire to pay for what I have had at your houſe, which I think cannot exceed a ſhilling in value." He then threw down a ſhilling

a ſhilling on the table; and, without attending to Mr. Whitly any farther, left his houſe; and hardly knowing what he did, he went towards the houſe of his father. The ingratitude and ſelfiſhneſs of the man whom he had left gave him an additional pang; but it was only momentary, for grief of a more corroſſive nature overwhelmed him; and when he arrived at the door of the houſe he propoſed entering, his knees trembled under him; his looks were wild and haggard; and he was incapable of conſidering that the houſe was now in poſſeſſion of ſtrangers. He paſſed into the yard, which was ſurrounded by the offices; but all was changed; and he ſtood in the ſtupefaction of deſpair, without having any preciſe idea of what he intended to do, till he was rouſed from this torpid ſtate by a maid-ſervant, who, hearing the dogs bark, came out and enquired what he did there.

Orlando anſwered incoherently that it was his father's houſe—that he came to look for his father.—The girl in terror left him; and

and, believing him either a madman or a robber, but rather the former, ran in to her miſtreſs, and, carefully locking the kitchen door, informed her that there was a crazy man in the yard. This young woman, who was the miſtreſs of one of Stockton's friends to whom he had lent the houſe, wanted neither underſtanding nor humanity, however deficient ſhe might be in other virtues; and knowing the natural propenſity of the vulgar to terrify themſelves and others, ſhe called to a man, who was at work in the garden, to follow her, and then went to ſpeak herſelf to the perſon whom her ſervant had repreſented as a lunatic.

She found the unhappy young man ſeated on a pile of wood near the door; his arms reſting on his knees and concealing his face. The noiſe of her opening the door and approaching him ſeemed not to rouſe him from his mournful reverie: but ſhe ſpoke gently to him; and Orlando, looking up, ſhewed a countenance on which extreme agony of mind was ſtrongly

painted, but which was ſtill handſome and interesting, and appeared to belong to one who had ſeen better days:—" Is there any thing, Sir, you wiſh to know? Can I be of any ſervice to you?" Theſe few words, ſpoken in a pleaſing female voice, had an immediate effect in ſoftening the heart of Orlando, petrified by affliction He burſt into tears; and riſing ſaid—" Ah, Madam! forgive my intruſion, forgive me, who am a ſtranger w ere I had once a home. This houſe was my father's!—Here I left him when ſeventeen months ſince I went to Ame ica—Here I left my father, my mother, and three ſiſters—and all, all are gone!" He loſt his voice, and leaned againſt a tree near him.

The young perſon, extremely affected by the genuine expreſſion of grief, and convinced that he was no madman, now invited him into the parlour; and Orlando, unknowing what he did, followed her.

Every object that he ſaw was a dagger to his heart. As Philip had ſold to Stockton every thing as it remained at his father's

death,

death, a great part of the furniture was the ſame. Startled at every ſtep he took by the recollection of ſome well-known object, he entered the parlour more dead than alive, and pale as a corpſe, and with quivering lips, he attempted to ſpeak, but could not. The young woman ſaw his agitation, and pouring him out a large glaſs of wine, beſought him to drink it, and to compoſe himſelf, again repeating her offers of kindneſs. He put back the glaſs—"I thank you, Madam, but I cannot drink—I cannot ſwallow.—That picture," added he, fixing his eyes wildly on a landſcape over the chimney—"that picture belonged to my father; he uſed, I remember, to value it highly—I beg your pardon, Madam—I know not what I propoſed by coming hither, unleſs it were to procure a direction to my mother and ſiſters. Where my father is I know too well, though I believe," continued he, putting his hand to his forehead, "that I ſaid when I firſt came into the court-yard, that I looked for him—Can you, Madam, tell

me where I can find the part of my family that does ſurvive?"

The young woman, with increaſing intereſt, told him that ſhe had been there only a few weeks, and was quite a ſtranger in the country; but that, if he could recollect any perſon thereabouts likely to be better informed, ſhe would ſend a ſervant to fetch them, or with any meſſage he might direct.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

AFTER a pauſe, ſufficiently expreſſive of the difficulty with which he thought, Orlando ſaid, that there was at the neighbouring town an Attorney with whom his father had been long connected; and who at his ſetting out in life had received many favours from the family of Somerive.—To him he wiſhed to ſend—" or rather I will go to him, Madam—for why ſhould I be longer troubleſome to you?" He then got up; but the young perſon with great gentleneſs and good nature, ſaid, " You are not able, I am ſure, to walk ſo far—if you are not too much wounded by the recollections that ſurround you here to-ſtay, I beg you to take ſome refreſhment, while I ſend a ſervant to the gentleman; he ſhall go on horſeback, and will ſoon be back."

As Orlando did indeed doubt whether he was able to walk ſo far as the town, and an idea ſtruck him, that while the meſſenger was gone, he could viſit the family vault, in the church of Weſt Wolverton, where the remains of his father were depoſited, he accepted, after a ſlight apology, of the obliging offer of his hoſteſs; who bringing him pen and ink, he wrote with an uncertain and trembling hand— "Mr. O. Somerive being returned from America, and quite ignorant till his arrival here of the many alterations in this neighbourhood, will eſteem it a favour if Mr. Brock will oblige him with his company for half an hour—at the houſe formerly his father's at Weſt Wolverton.—"

Having ſent away this note, and being prevailed upon to take the refreſhment he had at firſt refuſed; he told his new acquaintance, that he had a wiſh to viſit two or three places in the adjoining village, and would, with her premiſſion, return to the houſe in time to meet Mr. Brock, if he were

were ſo obliging as to attend upon his meſſage.

The ſervant being ſent away, Orlando ſet forth to viſit the tomb of his father.—He knew well the ſpot: it was in the chancel of the church, and the entrance was marked by a ſtone, with the arms of Somerive and Rayland quartered upon it. The ſexton, who at firſt appeared to have loſt all recollection of him, gave him the keys as ſoon as he knew him—and the unhappy wanderer, throwing himſelf on the ground, gave way to that grief which he had hitherto checked.—Now it was, however, that he felt the reward of his dutiful conduct; for he was conſcious that, except in the ſingle inſtance in regard to his ſiſter Iſabella, he had never wilfully diſobeyed his father; and he felt too, that if by taking Monimia with him, or by any other act of diſobedient ingratitude, he had felt himſelf acceſſary to that affliction which he too well underſtood had haſtened the death of his parent, that ſorrow, which was now unmixed with ſelf-reproach, would

then have driven him to diſtraction.—As he kiſſed and took a laſt leave of this depoſit of the aſhes of his family, he recollected, that his affection to the loſt friend whom he deplored would be ſhewn rather by his tenderneſs and duty towards his mother and ſiſters, than by giving himſelf up to uſeleſs deſpair.—Rouſed by this reflection to more manly thoughts, he aroſe from the ground, and his heart having been relieved by the indulgence he had thus given to his grief, he quitted the church with a deep ſigh, and determined to walk as quickly as he could round Rayland park—having an unconquerable deſire to viſit the turret of Monimia, which he thought he might do in the day time, by letting himſelf in through the ſame door where he had entered before; and as he knew every part of the houſe, finding his way thither without alarming the vigilance of the old woman who kept the houſe. In this intention he traverſed the outſide of the park paling very haſtily, when the ſight of the north lodge and the cottage

cottage near it, brought to his mind the circumſtances of Monimia's letter; who there deſcribed her meeting with Sir John Belgrave; and he thought the woman of the cottage might give him ſome particulars, which he hitherto had not been able to learn.—Entering therefore, and making her, not without much difficulty, recollect him; he was forced to bear all her wondering, and all her enquiries, before he could prevail upon her to give him the following particulars:

"Lord, Sir! why now I tell you as well as I can all how theſe bad things have come to paſs.—In the firſt place, after you was gone, ſomehow there ſeemed no content at the Hall—I heard ſay, that Madam began to droop as 'twere a fortnight or two afterwards; and was never pleas'd with nothing that could be done for her—And there came out a ſtory about Pattenſon—the rights of the matter, my huſband ſays, never were cleared up; but however, to the ſurpriſe of every body, my Lady ſhe believed ſome ſtory about him; and

though 'twas reported he tried to turn the tables upon Madam Lennard, ſure enough he was diſmiſſed from the Hall for good; but for certain not like a diſgraced ſervant; for Madam gave him a power of good things, and his farm as he took was ſtocked from the Hall; and ſure enough he had feather'd his neſt well one way or other; for he died worth a mort of money."—

"Pattenſon is dead then?" ſaid Orlando.

"Lord help you, yes!" anſwered the good woman—"Why he died of the gout in his ſtomach juſt afore my Lady—But if you'll have a little patience I'll go on with my ſtory. So Pattenſon went away; and after that Madam Lennard ſeem'd ſomehow to govern my Lady more than ever; yet folks ſaid, that it was not ſo much ſhe, as them there Rokers, uncle and nephew, that was put in by her as ſtewards; and to be ſure there was for a long time ſtrange talk—and they ſaid, that Madam Lennard was jealous of young Roker, he as ſhe afterwards married—and ſo ſent away

her

her niece's daughter, that ſweet pretty young creature that you remember at the Hall."

"And what is become of her?" cried Orlando eagerly—"Whither was ſhe ſent?"

"Why that nobody knew nothing about at the time, as every body ſaw Madam Lennard was ſhy of ſpeaking of her; but folks *have* ſaid ſince, that ſhe was gone up to London, with ſome Lord or Baron Knight; for my part, as I ſays to my huſband, I don't care to give credit to ſuch ſcandalous ſtories upon mere hearſay.—However, to go on with my ſtory:—By then Madam Lennard had ſent this poor young thing away, every body thought how the affair would go—at leaſt folks about the houſe ſays, they ſaw it plain enough—So then, your poor father, who had been ailing a long time, he was taken ſick, and when all the doctors had given him over, he ſent to beg Mrs. Rayland would come to him; and though Mrs. Lennard ſhe did, as I've heard ſay, all ſhe could to hinder my Lady's going, ſhe

ſhe went; and though nobody knows what paſſed, becauſe nobody was in the room but Madam Somerive, your good mother, yet every body ſaid, that the 'ſquire got a power better after he had ſeen the old lady, and ſaid his mind was eaſy; and then every body thought he would recover—and it was given out, that the 'ſquire had ſeen my Lady's will, or, however, that ſhe had told him the contents, and that ſhe had made you her heir."

"Me?" ſaid Orlando—"alas! no!"—

"Well, but that was the notion of the country, and I am ſure, there's nobody in all this here part of our county but what heartily wiſhes it had been true—Well, and ſo 'Squire Somerive he went on for a little while, getting better and better; till ſomething freſh broke out, about your brother, Mr. Philip; and ſo upon that, he grew worſe again, and died in a few days. Oh! what ſad affliction all the family was in! but Madam, at the Hall, was more kind to them than ſhe uſed to be; for ſhe ſent to fetch them up to the Hall

Hall the d[illegible]f the funeral, and kept them there three or four days, till the young 'ſquire hearing how his father was dead, came down—then your mother and ſiſters went back to their houſe: but alack-a-day! —he ſoon began to make ſad alterations, and was driving a bargain for the ſale of the eſtate to 'Squire Stockton, almoſt, folks ſaid, before his father was cold in his grave."—

Orlando claſped his hands eagerly together, and drew a convulſed ſigh; but he was unable to interrupt the narration, and the woman went on—

"So, Sir, juſt about that time Madam Rayland ſhe was taken ill—yet it did not ſeem, ſomehow, that there was much the matter with her; but ſhe drooped, and drooped, and pined, and pined—and people ſaid, as ſaw her ſometimes, that is, the footmen who waited before ſhe took to her bed, and the maids as ſat up with her, eſpecially Rachel, that ſhe honed ſo after you, and uſed to ſend every day to your mother to know if ſhe had heard of you; and ſent for

for her to come to her, and g[illegible]her letters for you to desire you would come back; for she mistrusted, somehow, that Lennard had never sent the letters she wrote to you before; and all the people said, that Lennard, with all her art, had not been able to keep matters so snug, about her lover, but that her lady had an inkling of the matter—And they said, too, that Madam was not half so fond of her as she used to be; but that she had been used to her so long, and had been so in the custom of letting her do what she would, that now, as she was so old, and sick, and feeble, and out of spirits, she had not resolution to speak her mind.——Well, Madam died, and then—Good Lord, what a work there was at Hall!"—

"How do you mean?" said Orlando.

"Why, your brother Philip sent to take possession of every thing as heir at law; but old Roker and his nephew would not let him or his people come in; as they said they had a will of Madam Rayland's, and he must come and hear it read.

—Your

—Your mother tried, as I heard ſay, to pacify your brother; becauſe ſhe knew, or however believed for certain, that your honour's ſelf was the heir—So with that, upon a day appointed by theſe Rokers, who had poſſeſſion of the houſe, your poor mother, and your two ſiſters, and the young 'ſquire your brother, they went to the Hall, and there, as I heard ſay, was the two Rokers and Madam Lennard, and the ſervants, all aſſembled; and ſo young Roker took upon him to read the will, though your brother took a young lawyer with him from London, one Counſellor Staply; and there the will was read; and inſtead of leaving you the heir, it was a will made ever ſo long before, when Madam Rayland was out of humour with Mr. Somerive: and ſo there, it ſeems, that ſhe gave five thouſand pounds to Pattenſon if he outlived her, but he was dead, and there was an end of that; and two thouſand to the old coachman, who is as rich as a jew already—and a matter of ten thouſand to Mrs. Lennard—And not

only

only ſo, but all her clothes—and ever ſo many pieces of fine plate; and a diamond ring—and the Hampſhire farms, which ben't worth ſo little as four hundred pounds a year—And then, all Madam's fine laces, and ſattin gowns, and her ſiſter's too, for none of them had ever been given away—They ſay that 'twas not ſo little as ſix or ſeven hundred pounds worth of clothes and laces; and all the fine houſehold linen—Such beautiful great damaſk table-cloths and napkins—and ſuch great cheſts full of ſheets; beſides a mort of things that I cannot remember not I—But the great houſe, and all the noble eſtates in this county, ſhe gave to the Biſhop, as I ſuppoſe you know, and to the Dean and Chapter, for charitable uſes, and to build a ſort of alms-houſe—But it's very well known that the greateſt part of it will go into their own pockets—and I cannot think, for my ſhare, and my huſband he ſays the ſame, why a deuce Madam gave her money to them there parſons, when they always take care to have enough out

out of the farmers and poor men, let who will go without."

A deep ſigh was again extorted from Orlando, and the good goſſip remarking it, ſaid: "Ah, Sir, to be ſure you may well ſigh!—Such a fine eſtate! and ſo juſtly your right by all accounts; and then after promiſing your father ſo faithfully too!—Poor Madam Somerive, your good mother, was in very ſad trouble—Philip he raved and ranted, and made a ſad to-do, but there was no remedy; them two Rokers had got poſſeſſion of the houſe, and after the funeral, I reckon, they thought to have kept it, as ſteward s to the new owners; but whip! the parſons come upon them, and packed them off; and they've put in old Betty Grant and her ſon juſt to look after it, and open the windows—But, Lord! I'm ſure the place looks ſo mollencholy as makes my very heart ach to paſs it.—But, however, to go on with my ſtory of all the troubles of your poor dear mother—After this, a week or ſo, news came by a negur man

as

as went with that young captain as your ſiſter Belle ran away with, that he and miſs were drowned or caſt away, at ſome place beyond ſea—I can't remember rightly the name of it; but, however, that they were loſt, and that you were killed in battle by the wild Ingines; this man told my huſband he ſaw you dead with his own eyes, and your ſkull cleft with one of their ſwords"—

"And where," ſaid Orlando, "is this man now?"—"Why, Madam took him," replied the woman, "and when the family left the country, he went up to London with them"—

"And how long have they been gone?"

"Nigh two months, as well as I can remember; poor dear ladies! I'm ſure we poor folks miſs them ſadly, and ſo we do the Hall."——

"And my brother," enquired Orlando, "what is become of my brother?"

"Oh, as for that," anſwered the woman, "nobody knows; and I muſt ſay this, 'ſquire, that if you'd a been like him, nobody would

have

have been ſo ſorry as they were, that Madam gave her money elſewhere; for would you think it?—at the very time he came down here to take poſſeſſion of his houſe, after the poor gentleman his father's death, and when all the family was in ſuch affliction—what did he do, but bring down that naſty flaunting huſſey Bet Richards, that was, took from the pariſh work-houſe to be houſemaid at the Hall—whom he have kept in London all's one as a lady, and dreſſed her up better than any of his ſiſters—and ſhe's as impudent and proud!—I'd have all ſuch wicked toads ſent to beat hemp—and every body has ſaid 'twas a thouſand pities ſhe was not in her old place the work-houſe again, inſtead of prancing about as ſhe did, to break poor dear Madam Somerive's heart; who, though ſhe ſeemed to bear it all with patience, and to take no notice, was quite as I may ſay, ſunk and weighed down with one ſorrow's falling ſo faſt upon another—and, at laſt, when ſhe found the houſe and eſtate

eſtate and all the goods were ſold, and that ſhe and her daughters muſt leave it; and then, juſt afterwards, when the negur's news came, ſhe ſeemed to be quite, quite gone!—and I heard ſay, her health was in a bad ſtate after ſhe got to London."

Dreadfully affected by this account of his mother, all of whoſe ſufferings he felt, however coarſe and ſimple the relation of them, Orlando now again enquired of his informer, if ſhe knew where his mother and ſiſters lived in town?—She ſaid, No; there was a neighbour's daughter gone up lately to London to live with them as a ſervant; whoſe friends knew the direction, and to them ſhe would ſend if he would ſtay. Orlando thanked her—and then expreſſed ſome wonder that his mother, who had always diſliked London, ſhould fix there. To which the woman ſaid, "Why, Sir, I've heard ſay, that the reaſon of that was, that Madam's brother, the London Merchant, inſiſted upon it; and another reaſon was, becauſe ſhe thought that if ſhe was not always

at

at his elbow, your brother would go after his pleaſures and that; and ſo neglect the great law-ſuit."

"What law-ſuit?"—ſaid Orlando, who had forgotten at that moment the vague information he had received from the miller.

"Why you muſt know, Sir," replied the woman, "that when firſt my Lady died, there was a great talk about the country, that there was ſome black doings about the will; for from what ſhe had ſaid to your father, and from a great many other things ſhe had ſaid, and from her having Lawyers from London come down about three years and a half ago, when folks thought ſhe made a new will in your favour; there were thoſe, and in the houſe too, who didn't ſcruple to ſay, that the real will was made away with by them Rokers, and that an old will was proved—So your brother he was adviſed by counſellor Staply to go to law;—but he ſaid if there was another will, it was in your favour, not in his; and he'd as lieve the

Parſons,

Parſons, or the Devil, had the eſtate as you.—However, when a little while after news came of your death, then he went to law directly; becauſe, he ſaid, if there was ſuch a will, he was your heir-at-law, and the old woman's too:—and ſo he is ſuing the Rokers; that is, Mrs. Lennard and her huſband; for you know the old ſoul took to herſelf a young huſband at laſt."

Orlando expreſſing his ſurpriſe at this, enquired where they lived—"Oh!" anſwered ſhe, "when they found they were bit as to continuing in the ſtewardſhip, and that Archdeacon Hollybourn had provided another for my Lord Biſhop and the Parſons, and was to overlook the eſtate himſelf, Mr. and Mrs. Roker went away to live in Hampſhire, upon the eſtate my Lady gave them there; and there, I underſtand, they live quite like great people, and are viſited and noticed by all the quality; only Madam I hear is terribly jealous;—and they ſay her young huſband is not over and above good-humoured to her,

though he got ſuch a great fortune by her."

The good woman ſeemed never weary of talking; but having at length exhauſted all ſhe could recollect, and promiſing to procure a direction from her neighbour, and ſend it down in a few minutes to Weſt Wolverton, Orlando took his leave. And as, juſt as he left the cottage, the clock in it ſtruck three, he was afraid of intruding upon the benevolence of his new friend, at the houſe once his father's, if he left her long with the lawyer whom he had ſent for; and therefore, inſtead of going then to make his mournful viſit to the turret, he returned to Weſt Wolverton, where he found the man ſent to the town had been ſome time returned, and had brought from his father's former friend, the attorney, a note to this purport—

"Mr. Brock's compts: imagines ſome miſtake—has not the honor to know any gentleman of the name of Somerive; except

except Philip S. Esq; late of West Wolverton—hopes to be excused, being particularly engaged."

This note completed the distress of Orlando, who saw that he should now be taken for an impostor where he was, and obtain no credit where he expected it to carry him to London, where he now most earnestly wished to be, because there only could he hope to see his family, or to have any explanation of the hints so darkly given by the labourer's wife—hints, which among the complicated misfortunes which surrounded him, gave him the most insupportable pain.—" Gone with some lord !" Impossible—Yet the very idea was distraction. He was believed dead. He regretted that he had not asked whether Monimia heard of his death, not at that moment recollecting that his informer's knowledge hardly went so far ; and that, by her account, Monimia was gone before the death of Mrs. Rayland, and before the arrival of the intelligence brought by Perseus

ſeus the negro: yet again he recollected, that if Selina and Monimia ſtill correſponded, ſhe muſt immediately have known it; and thus by all he loved in the world he was conſidered as dead.

To undeceive them as ſoon as he could was what appeared moſt neceſſary; but how to do that he knew not. He could not bear to beg of any of the neighbouring gentlemen—indeed he knew none of them but Stockton (who was the laſt man in the world he deſired to meet), for all the reſt were at a great diſtance, and the elder Somerive had never ſought their acquaintance: ſome were too expenſive for him, and others too ignorant to afford him any pleaſure in their ſociety. By the richeſt he was contemned as a petty gentleman; and by the reſt envied as the future poſſeſſor of Rayland Hall—and therefore very little intercourſe had ever paſſed between them and the family at Weſt Wolverton. While Orlando, whom his hoſpitable acquaintance had the conſideration to leave by himſelf, was medi-

tating on his wretched and forlorn ſituation, a young man was introduced into the room, in whom he immediately recollected a clerk to the lawyer to whom his unſucceſsful note had been written; who, immediately acknowledging him, changed as he was, related, that Mr. Brock having ſhewn him the note, and declaimed againſt it as an impoſition, it being, he ſaid, perfectly well known that Orlando Somerive was dead—the young man thought he recollected his hand, there having been formerly ſome degree of intimacy between them; and unwilling to diſpute the point with Brock, who was, he told him, Solicitor in the depending cauſe between the Biſhop and the Somerive family, he had made ſome excuſe of buſineſs, and came to ſee himſelf whether it was his old friend, or ſome one wiſhing to repreſent him.

All the difficulties which Orlando had to encounter as to going to London were now removed at once—This young man, Mr. Dawſon, offered not only to ſupply him with money but clothes; and they agreed

to

to proceed together to the town in the dusk, as Orlando did not wish to be known, nor indeed to be seen, in his present condition. This being settled, Orlando would immediately have taken leave of his humane hostess; but she entreated both him and his friend to stay dinner, with a frankness and good humour which Dawson was less disposed than Orlando to resist. As soon as it was nearly dark she ordered him to be accommodated with a horse, and sent a servant with him to bring it back.

With a thousand grateful acknowledgments Orlando took his leave; and with an agonizing sigh left, as he believed for ever, the paternal house and the neighbourhood of the Hall, without having been able to indulge his melancholy by visiting the turret.

His friend, though he could give him very little information more than he had already received, and none about Monimia, yet soothed and consoled him; and, having equipped him with a coat, hat, and linen of his own, as they were nearly of a

ſize, he put five guineas into his hand; and, deſiring to hear from him, ſaw him into the ſtage-coach, which, at ſix every morning, ſet out from the town where they were for London.

CHAP. IV.

THE variety of uneafy emotions which paffed through the mind of Orlando, as he journeyed towards London, would be difficult to defcribe, fince he himfelf could hardly difcriminate them; but each, though not diftinct, was acutely painful. In what a fituation did he return to his family! in what a fituation did he find it! How fhould he, while his mind was yet enfeebled from the cruel difappointments he had experienced on his arrival in England, be able to bear the tears of his mother, the forrow of his two fifters? how confole them for the lofs they had fuftained? how ftrengthen by his example their more tender minds, to endure what he feared the diffolute folly of his brother might yet bring upon them; while his own

heart recoiled from the idea of meeting that brother, and was bleeding with the dreadful wounds inflicted by the uncertainty of what was become of Monimia; which, had he not entertained ſome hopes of hearing of her from his ſiſter Selina, would have driven him to diſtraction! Of his ſiſter Iſabella he thought too with great concern; and when the reflection, which alone brought ſome comfort to his mind, occurred to him, that he had reſiſted the temptation Warwick threw in his way, and had not, to gratify himſelf, plunged another dagger in the heart of his father—even this conſolatory teſtimony of his conſcience was embittered by the enquiry that conſcience immediately made, whether he had not acted wrong in not diſcovering the deſign of Warwick, and had not ſacrificed his real duty to a miſtaken point of honour. As he approached London, the agitation of his mind became greater. As his mother believed him dead, his ſudden appearance might have the moſt fatal effects—That even if he was put down at a coffee-houſe,

and

and ſent a note to inform her of his arrival, the ſight of his hand-writing might equally affect a mother and ſiſters, who had long lamented him as conſigned to a grave on the banks of Hudſon's River.

There was one expedient that occurred, which, though extremely diſagreeable to him, he at length determined to adopt—which was, to go on his reaching London to Mr. Woodford's, and conſult with him on the properеſt way of diſcovering to his family his unexpected arrival.

Though he was aware that he ſhould have only inſulting pity or coarſe raillery to ſuſtain from his uncle, he thought the dread of ſuch tranſient and inconſequential evils, ſhould yield to the important point of not injuring the health of a parent ſo beloved; and as ſoon as the ſtage in which he travelled reached Weſtminſter Bridge, he got into an hackney coach and ordered it to be driven to the houſe of Mr. Woodford.

On his reaching this place, and enquiring for him, he was told by a maid that

opened the door, that Mr. Woodford's family had been removed fome months from that houfe, and refided in King's Street, St. James's Square, at an houfe of which the maid gave him the number, and whither he immediately repaired.

It was eafily found—two lamps at the door, and the appearance of the houfe, which had been lately refitted in a ftyle of uncommon elegance, feemed to fay to Orlando, that he would find his uncle in increafing affluence.

A very fmart powdered footman opened the door, who, upon being afked if Mr. Woodford was at home, anfwered fhortly, No; and furveying the hackney coach with contempt, feemed difpofed to clofe the half-opened door, without attending to any farther enquiries.

But Orlando, putting his head out of the coach, called to the fervant, and enquired at what time that evening he could fee Mr. Woodford, with whom he had bufinefs that admitted of no delay.

"He can't be feen to-night," faid the

fervant; "he is engaged for the evening."

"If you will tell me where then," replied Orlando, "I will go to him, for I muft fee him immediately."

The man, who feemed afraid of venturing out to the coach door, left he fhould foil his fhoes, or lofe the powder from his hair, ftill held the door only partly open, and faid very fullenly—"You muft leave your bufinefs, and call again—my mafter will do no bufinefs with any body to night; he expects company to dinner; and I am fure he won't be difturbed."

Orlando now got out of the coach, and faid to the fervant, that as he was Mr. Woodford's nephew, he was fure he would fee him. The man then, though with apparent reluctance, opened the door of a back parlour, and, while he ftood at it himfelf, as if he was afraid Orlando would fteal fomething, called to another footman to go and inform his mafter that his nephew defired to fee him below.

At the fame moment loud rapping was

heard at the door, and the man, in viſible diſtreſs, ſaid, "I ſhall be blamed for letting any body in—here's the company come; I wiſh, Sir, you'd call any other time—there's my Lord and Sir Richard and Lady Wiggin, and Sir James and Lady Penguin—it's quite impoſſible, Sir, for my maſter to ſee you."

Orlando had not time to anſwer, before the other footman returned, and ſaid very roughly, that his maſter deſired the perſon, whoever he was, to walk out—for he muſt be an impoſtor, becauſe he acknowledged no nephew.

Orlando, imagining that Mr. Woodford ſuppoſed him to be his brother, and therefore would not ſee him, had only to quit the houſe, and deſiſt from his deſign of ſpeaking to his uncle that evening; or to convince him that he had yet a nephew living, whom he had at leaſt no reaſon to diſclaim: he reſolved on the latter, and putting back with his hand the ſervants who would have oppoſed his paſſage, he went up ſtairs. The door of the dining-

room

room was yet open, for the visitors had hardly yet settled themselves, and some were standing near it till Sir Richard and Lady Wiggin had paid their compliments. Orlando, notwithstanding the abusive and insolent efforts of the servants, who had followed him up stairs to stop him, entered the room, and going up to Mr. Woodford, who stared at him as a perfect stranger, made himself immediately known to him. Mr. Woodford expressed more surprise than pleasure. But he could not help acknowledging his nephew, whom he slightly named to his guests, and coldly asked him to sit down and stay dinner.

Orlando, not much flattered by his reception, answered, that as he had not seen his mother, he must hasten to her, and meant no farther to intrude upon Mr. Woodford, than to consult with him on the properest way of breaking to his mother, news the joy of which might overpower her.

"Oh!" cried Woodford, "if that be all, I fancy you may venture to take your own

own way—I never heard that joy killed any body; and I don't imagine you have much good fortune to relate (added he, surveying him) to turn the brains of your family."

Lady Wiggin, a squat figure, most sumptuously dressed, now surveyed Orlando, as he stood talking to his uncle before the fire, and then whispered to a younger woman who sat next her, whom he had not till then observed, but in whom, under the disguise of the most preposterous extremity of the fashion, with a very high head, and cheeks of the last Parisian dye, he discovered his elder cousin, to whom he bowed; while she slightly bowing in return, bit the end of her fan, and screwing herself into an attitude which she seemed to have studied, replied with half shut eyes to the whisper of her titled neighbour.

Woodford seemed glad that Orlando declined dining with him, yet was unwilling to take the trouble of interfering in his first introduction to his mother. Predetermined not to be discouraged by the unfeeling

unfeeling raillery, or repreſſed by the coldneſs of his uncle, he enquired again in a low voice, if he could be allowed to ſpeak to him alone—"I have much to ſay to you, Sir," ſaid he, "which it is not proper to diſcourſe upon now. You may imagine I am very impatient to ſee my mother and my ſiſters—I will not detain you long—only let me for five minutes aſk your attention below."

The great man, who was no longer a wine merchant in the Strand ſoliciting the cuſtom of the great, but their pompous entertainer, who was enabled, by the advantages of a great contract obtained by the favour (and perhaps by yielding to the participation) of one of them, to vie in ſplendour with his patrons, ſeemed to be made very reſtleſs by this demand—"I'd go down into my ſtudy with you, with all my heart;" ſaid he, in the ſame low tone; "but my Lord and Sir James are not come, and my ſon not being here to receive them, I ſhould be ſorry . . . . but however . . . . . you had better ſtay and dine perhaps, and

then

then . . .!" Another loud rap at the door relieved him from this embarraſſment; it wanted but a quarter to ſeven, and my Lord was announced. In the buſtle to receive ſo eminent a perſonage, with what Woodford thought politeneſs, but what appeared to Orlando the moſt cringing ſervility he had ever witneſſed, his worthy uncle ſeemed totally to have forgotten him; and before the ceremony of this reception, and that of Sir James, who followed the peer as one of his ſatellites, was over, dinner was announced; and the company proceeded down ſtairs; while Orlando, finding that his uncle had as little taſte for poor relations as if he had been born himſelf a great man, inſtead of having ſuddenly become ſo, by means which Orlando wondered at, rather than underſtood, took the opportunity of opening the ſtreet door himſelf, and returned to his hack, which was driven into the ſquare, to make room for the ſplendid equipages which had ſince arrived at the door.

He ſtepped in; but when the coachman

aſked him whither to drive, he knew not what to reply. He knew nobody: nor did he recollect one friend in this immenſe town, to whom he could in ſuch an exigence apply.—The ſmall houſe his mother had taken, was in Howland-Street; and he thought he had better drive to ſome coffee-houſe in the neighbourhood, where he might conſider how he could firſt ſpeak to Selina. As he proceeded to a coffee-houſe in Oxford Street, which the coachman named to him upon his enquiring for one, he could not help reflecting on the ſtrange viciſſitudes of fortune, and the ſtrange way in which her gifts are divided. It was only a few months ſince he had an almoſt undoubted proſpect of ſucceeding to the great eſtates of Mrs. Rayland; he was now not only deprived of all thoſe hopes, but was literally a beggar—and going home, not to aſſiſt his ruined family, but to add to it another indigent member, and to weep with them all the mournful changes that had happened during his abſence.

He

He had not yet determined how he ſhould introduce himſelf to the dear dejected group, when he arrived at the coffee-houſe, where he diſcharged his coach, and called for a private room. He then, ſince no better expedient occurred to him, deſired a pen, ink, and paper, and in an hand which he attempted to diſguiſe (and he trembled ſo as to aid the deception) he wrote theſe few words to Selina—"Your brother Orlando is living, and in England —have the preſence of mind not to betray this ſecret, which will I think give you great pleaſure, to your mother too ſuddenly; and when he knows he can come without too much ſurpriſing your mother, he will be at your door."—He had hardly finiſhed and directed this note, in which he tried to alter his hand only that the ſight of it might not ſo ſuddenly ſtrike his ſiſter as to render his precaution uſeleſs, he recollected, that as Perſeus the negro was now his mother's ſervant, he had better go himſelf to the door of the houſe; diſcover himſelf to that faithful

faithful fellow; and contrive, by his means, to ſpeak to Selina firſt.

This ſcheme appeared to him ſo much better than the firſt, that he determined to put it into immediate execution. However, he put the note he had written into his pocket, that if Perſeus happened not to be at home, he might ſtill proceed as he had at firſt intended.

With a beating heart he approached the door, and heſitated with apprehenſion before he could determine to knock at it. At length he gave a loud ſingle rap, and Perſeus appeared.—"Do you know me, Perſeus?" ſaid Orlando, in a low voice. "Know you," anſwered the negro, who ſpoke pretty good Engliſh, and without much of the negro accent—"No! how ſhould I know you?" "Have you forgot," ſaid Orlando, "the morning we paſſed together in the wood, on the banks of Hudſon's River?" While he thus ſpoke, Perſeus held the candle, which he had ſet down in the paſſage, to his face, and with a ſudden exclamation letting it fall, he ran

as faſt as he could back into the kitchen, declaring to the two maids, as trembling he threw himſelf into a chair, that he had ſeen a ghoſt.

The elder of theſe women, a ſtout peaſant from the weald of Suſſex, who had no notion of ghoſts, huffed the affrighted negro for his folly, and ſaid, "I wonder what you mean, Perſeus—why ſure you are not in your right wits? A ghoſt quotha! I hope you have not left the door open, with your ghoſts?"

"I cannot tell," cried Perſeus—"but you better ſee—I ſee maſter Orlando's ghoſt, and I'll go no more."

Orlando, foreſeeing that from the poor fellow's terror, all the riſk would be incurred which he had wiſhed to avoid, now walked into the houſe, in the hope of preventing his mother and ſiſters from being alarmed by the folly of the ſervants; and when Hannah aſcended to ſecure the door, which ſhe had been ſtrictly enjoined never to leave of an evening without a chain, ſhe met Orlando on the top of the ſtairs. Struck

with

with equal terror, though from a different cause, ſhe now ſcreamed and returned to the kitchen, where, as well as her fright would let her, ſhe declaimed againſt the folly of Perſeus, who being afraid of a ghoſt, had let in a man.

Orlando, provoked by the ridiculous fears of both, now went into the kitchen; and not without difficulty convinced the negro that he was alive; and the maid, that he had no intention to rob the houſe: but all the clamour that theſe miſtakes had excited, could not be unheard in the room where Mrs. Somerive was ſitting with her daughters; and the bell had rung violently ſeveral times, before the aſſurance of Orlando's identity had reſtored to Perſeus courage enough to obey the ſummons.

Orlando entreated of him to go up, to account for the noiſe below as well as he could, and to beckon, or by ſome other means contrive to get his ſiſter Selina out of the room. Perſeus, trembling with his former apprehenſions and his preſent joy, undertook to do this, and haſtened up

ſtairs.

ſtairs. At the door of the dining-room Selina ſtood, and aſked him if any thing was the matter below; and Mrs. Somerive eagerly repeated the queſtion, ſaying— "Perſeus, is any thing wrong below? who was at the door?"—He advanced to the table near which his miſtreſs was ſitting, and ſaying to Selina in an half whiſper as he paſſed her—"'Tis your brother, miſs, you go ſee him," he anſwered to the queſtions Mrs. Somerive aſked him— "No, Ma'am—no bad matter—only that I thinked, that I . . . . . . that Hannah . . . ſhe ſay——" His confuſion was the more evident, the more he attempted to conceal it; nor did his dark ſkin conceal the emotion of his ſpirits; while Selina, who believed it was her elder brother, and who felt only terror at his name, approached the table paler than death; and Mrs. Somerive, convinced that ſomething was the matter below, though ſhe could not conjecture what, aroſe from her ſeat, and taking a candle ſaid, "What can have happened? Selina, my child—if you know it, for God's

ſake

ſake tell me!——Alas!" added ſhe recollecting all that had happened to her within ſo ſhort a ſpace—"after all I have ſuffered, what can I have to fear?"

She now approached the door, while neither Selina nor the ſervant had courage to ſtop her.—But in the paſſage ſhe was met by Hannah, whom Orlando, miſtruſting the ſkill of his firſt meſſenger, had ſent up while he waited himſelf at the foot of the ſtairs. Mrs. Somerive, more convinced from the appearance of the maid, that ſome alarming circumſtance had happened, was ſtruck with the idea of fire, and calling to her two daughters to follow her, ſaid: "The lower part of the houſe is on fire—let us, if it is ſo, make our eſcape.—Selina! Emma! my children! let me at leaſt ſave ſomething."

"Dear ma'am," exclaimed Hannah, "how you do fright yourſelf!—Lord! there's no fire below, I aſſure you: I'm ſure if there was, we ſhould not ſtand ſtaring here; but don't be frighted, pray, ma'am! nothing at all is the matter, but very good

news

news—Come, ma'am; pray go back into the room and ſit down, and make yourſelf eaſy; you can't imagine, I'm ſure, as that I would go for to deceive you."

Mrs. Somerive, hardly knowing what to believe, returned into the room; and Hannah following her, ſaid—" Now, ma'am, as you be ſo calm I'll tell you, it is the young captain, ma'am, your ſon—he is not dead, thank God."

" Not dead!" cried Mrs. Somerive, " my Orlando alive! Oh! it is impoſſible; don't be ſo inhuman as to awaken ſuch hopes, only to aggravate my miſery. He is dead, and I ſhall never ſee him more!" " No, no," ſaid Perſeus, " young captain's alive." " He is indeed, ma'am," cried Hannah. " Where?" ſaid Selina, " where is my brother?" " He is below, miſs," ſaid ſhe, in a low voice.—Selina ruſhed out of the room, and Orlando caught her in his arms. Emma, divided between her fears for her mother, who reſted almoſt inſenſible on the arm of the ſervant, and the anxious deſire to ſee her brother, trembled

and

and wept a moment; and then ſeeing him actually enter, Selina reſting on his arm, ſhe uttered a faint ſhriek, and flew back towards her mother, at whoſe feet Orlando kneeling, beſought her to recollect and compoſe herſelf. She threw her arms round him, but convulſive ſobs were the only ſigns ſhe gave of recollection; while the ſervant was bathing her temples, and her two daughters entreating her, for their ſakes, to aſſume a compoſure, which their own extreme agitation proved they did not themſelves poſſeſs.

The ſcene was too painful, though produced by exceſs of happineſs, to laſt long. The certainty that her ſon, her beloved Orlando, was living, was joy to which the mind of Mrs. Somerive, long weighed down by affliction, could not ſuſtain without feeling what almoſt approached to a momentary deprivation of reaſon; but the manly tenderneſs of Orlando, who argued with her, and the lively ſenſibility of her two girls, who hung around her, and entreated her not to deſtroy herſelf, now that they

they were ſo bleſt as to have their brother reſtored to them, at length called her to a greater ſerenity of mind; yet as ſhe looked at Orlando, ſhe ſtarted, ſhe trembled, and ſeemed to doubt whether ſhe was awake; and when ſhe ſpoke to him of his father, ſhe relapſed into ſuch inarticulate expreſſions of agonizing ſorrow, that her children, looking in conſternation at each other, dreaded the conſequence, ſo much had ſhe in thoſe moments the appearance of a perſon about to loſe her reaſon.

There was another topic which had not during the firſt hour of their incoherent conference been touched; and Orlando, who dreaded it, endeavoured to avoid it. This was the loſs of his ſiſter Iſabella; for that ſhe had periſhed at ſea, in their ill-ſtarred voyage to America, he now more than ever believed. He tried therefore to call off the attention of his mother from what ſhe had loſt; and to convince her, that not merely her ſon was reſtored to her, but reſtored to her as affectionate, and as

much

much attached to his family, as when in an evil hour he quitted it.

Mrs. Somerive, feeling herſelf unequal to ſome kind of converſation that evening, confined herſelf, when ſhe was able to do more than gaze at her ſon, to queſtions that related wholly to himſelf. She obſerved how very much he was altered—that his hair, of which in his infancy and youth ſhe had been ſo vain, was grown much darker, and had been cut cloſe to his head. Orlando, to eſcape from ſubjects which he thought would be from their cataſtrophes more painful to her, gave her, or rather attempted to give her, a ſhort hiſtory of his adventures, from his leaving New-York till his return to England; but when he came to ſpeak of the wounds he had received, and of his being carried up the country by the Iroquois, ſhe became ſo extremely faint, that Selina adviſed her, and ſhe conſented to deſiſt from any farther enqui ies, till ſhe was better able to bear the relation o Orlando's ſufferings. At the requeſt of her children ſhe conſented to go

early to reſt, where Emma was to remain with her till ſhe became more calm; and when Selina had ſeen her in bed, and left her in much quieter ſpirits, ſhe returned to Orlando, who was in an agony of impatience to enquire about Monimia, which in his mother's preſence he had not dared to alleviate or to betray.

When his ſiſter returned to him, they both ſat down by the fire; and the ſoft-tempered Selina yielded to thoſe emotions, which during her mother's alarming ſituation ſhe had ſtruggled to ſuppreſs. Orlando, his eyes overflowing, tenderly kiſſed her hand, and ſaid—"Are theſe tears, my own Selina, given to paſt ſorrows? or are they excited by your knowledge of tidings yet to come, that will wound the heart of your brother worſe than any of the accumulated miſeries which he has told you he has collected ſince his landing in England? ——Monimia! what is her fate, Selina? Where is ſhe? am I completely miſerable?" ..... He could not go on, nor could his ſiſter immediately anſwer him—"You do not

not ſpeak, Selina," cried he eagerly.... I can hear nothing worſe than my fears ſuggeſt, nor can any torment equal this horrid ſuſpenſe."

"Indeed," anſwered Selina, in a tremulous voice—"indeed I know no reaſon to believe that you ought to be in deſpair about her, but"—"But!" exclaimed he—"but what?—You believe—you don't know? Have you not *ſeen* her then, Selina? Is it poſſible you can have been ſo cruel to her, and to me, as to have abandoned her, becauſe ſhe was abandoned by all the reſt of the world, becauſe you thought me dead....? Oh, Selina! ſhould you not therefore have cheriſhed, with redoubled tenderneſs, her who was ſo very dear to me?"

"Have patience with me, my dear brother," replied Selina—"pray, have patience with me; and do not, do not condemn me unheard, nor ſuppoſe that I would willingly neglect or forſake her whom you loved, and whom I loved too. ..... But....."

"You have however forſaken her! you do not know where ſhe is now?"

"No indeed, I do not," anſwered Selina—"nor have I heard of her for many many months."

"Well," cried Orlando, with a deep ſigh, "I have patience, you ſee, Selina—I do not beat my breaſt, nor daſh myſelf againſt the wall. I am wretched, my ſiſter; but I will believe you could do nothing in performance of your ſolemn promiſe, nothing to avert ſuch extreme wretchedneſs, and I will not reproach you."

"You will have no cauſe," replied the weeping Selina; "indeed, Orlando, you will have none, when you have heard all I have to ſay—Oh! if you did but know all we have ſuffered!"

"Poor Monimia!" ſighed Orlando, "ſhe too has ſuffered, and in this general wreck I have loſt her—You do not even know then," continued he, "you do not even know if ſhe yet lives? I would rather hear of her death, than of her being expoſed to all the dangers I dread for her, perhaps to

diſgrace,

disſgrace, to ſhame, to infamy......."
This idea was too horrible; he ſtarted from his chair, wildly traverſed the room; and it was ſome time before Selina could perſuade him to liſten quietly to the relation he yet continued to demand of her.

CHAP. V.

"WHEN you left us, my brother," ſaid Selina, "we hardly thought it poſſible that any ſorrow could exceed what your departure and the apparent eſtrangement of Philip inflicted on us all; yet in a very few days we learned that, heavy as theſe evils were, they were only the beginning of that long train of calamity which was about to overtake us. Iſabella diſappeared within two days, and left a letter to ſay that ſhe was gone with Captain Warwick to America."

"And pray tell me," ſaid Orlando, interrupting her, "was my poor father extremely hurt at her elopement?"

"Not ſo much at her elopement, as at her having deceived him; for I do not believe,

believe, Orlando, that my father ever thought of Iſabella's marrying General Tracy without pain and doubts of her future happineſs. But it grieved him ſeverely to reflect that Iſabella was capable of deception, which, notwithſtanding the raſhneſs of her going away with a man ſhe hardly knew, muſt have been meditated for ſome days."

"Did my father believe me to have been a party in this deception?"

"Of that he ſometimes doubted: yet, after dwelling on thoſe doubts a moment, he would ſay, "No—Orlando could never be acquainted with the plan of theſe two young people;—Orlando would not have concealed their intentions from me—Orlando never in his life deceived me—He is all integrity and candour—""

"And in this perſuaſion my father died?"

"Yes; and never ſpoke of you, Orlando, but as the hope and reliance of us all."

Orlando ſighed deeply, reflecting that he had not deſerved in this ſingle inſtance the confidence of his father; yet he rejoiced

that, believing him ignorant of his ſiſter's flight, this opinion of his integrity had not been impaired where it could have done no good to have known the truth, and would only have inflicted another wound on his father's heart. Selina proceeded.

"We received your letter from Portſmouth, and ſome days afterwards another from Iſabella—I believe it was near a fortnight afterwards—She was about to embark for America with her huſband, who had hired a ſmall veſſel for that purpoſe, having miſſed his paſſage.—This, in ſome degree, quieted the apprehenſions of my father about my ſiſter; though, as General Tracy almoſt immediately diſinherited his nephew, we had the mortification of knowing that Iſabella had married in what is called a very indiſcreet way.—However, as nothing could be objected to Captain Warwick, but his conduct towards his uncle, and his conſequent want of fortune; and as the young people ſeemed to be paſſionately attached to each other, my father ſeemed gradually to loſe his anger, and to

recover

recover his ſpirits; when a new inſtance of Philip's cruel diſregard for us all threw him into an illneſs of ſo dangerous a nature, or rather ſo haſtened the progreſs of that which uneaſineſs about him had firſt brought on, that he was ſoon given up by the phyſicians. It was then that, believing himſelf dying, and feeling more concern for the ſtate in which he was about to leave us than for his own diſſolution, he ſent to Mrs. Rayland to come to him—a ſtep which, he ſaid, was very hazardous, but which he could not ſatisfy himſelf without taking. She came; we were none of us preſent at the converſation—but my father told us, as ſoon as ſhe was gone, that his mind was now quite eaſy, and that he ſhould die content, at leaſt as far as related to pecuniary affairs; for Mrs. Rayland had aſſured him, that in her laſt will ſhe had given you the Rayland eſtate, and entailed it all upon your poſterity, on condition of your taking the name and bearing the arms of Rayland only; that ſhe had ſet apart a ſum for the purchaſe of a baronet's

 title;

title; and that was the only money, except legacies to her ſervants to the amount of eight thouſand pounds in the whole, which ſhe had appropriated—having given you all the reſt of her real and perſonal eſtate; and my father ſaid that the latter had accumulated much more than he was aware of.

"I am ſure, ſaid he, when he had told us this—I am ſure that Orlando will uſe, as he ought to do, the power that is thus put into his hands to ſecure the proviſion for you, my love (ſpeaking to my mother), and for our dear girls—Nay, that, if our poor unhappy Philip ſhould, as my fears prognoſticate, utterly diſſipate his paternal fortune, that he too will find a reſource in the fraternal affection of his younger brother. In this perſuaſion my father became much eaſier, and, we hoped, grew much better: but a diſcovery that he very unluckily made by opening a letter intended for my brother, which, from the names being alike, he thought was his own—a diſcovery that Philip was actually in treaty with Stockton for

for the ſale of his future intereſt in the eſtate at Weſt Wolverton, quite undid all the good effects of Mrs. Rayland's generoſity, and in leſs than a fortnight we loſt our dear father—who, alas! Orlando, died of a broken heart!

"I will not diſtreſs you with a deſcription of the terrible ſcene—I mean that of his laſt hours; for, though he died calmly, recommending us to your protection and to that of Heaven, the diſtraction of my mother is not to be deſcribed; and I never think of it but my heart ſinks within me. —When the firſt ſhock was a little over, my mother reflected on the neceſſity of her living for us, unprotected and helpleſs as we were, and ſhe became more tranquil; though I am ſorry to ſay that the preſence of my brother Philip, who came down as ſoon as he heard of my father's death, did not ſerve to aſſiſt her in the recovery of her ſpirits.—On the contrary, his evident wiſh that we might ſoon remove from the houſe, and his bringing down a miſtreſs, whom he ſeemed impatient to put into it, were far

from being cordials to a mind ſo oppreſſed with her recent loſs.—The only hope that ſuſtained her was your return and ſucceeding to the Rayland eſtate: but even this comfortable hope was diminiſhed and embittered by a thouſand fears:—days, and weeks, and months, were paſſed, and we had not heard of your arrival at New-York; but learned that the fleet of tranſports, with which you ſailed, was diſperſed by a ſtorm, and ſome of the veſſels loſt. This I heard, for ill news is always communicated early; but I kept it from my mother till Mrs. Rayland's impatience, who ſent continually for news of you, and at length expreſſed her fears for you, in conſequence of the accounts ſhe ſaw in the newſpapers, diſcovered it; and added to all the ſufferings of my poor mother, doubts of your ſafety, which were more dreadful than any.——

" Mrs. Rayland, who had always diſliked my mother, and, as I thought, us till now, ſeemed much more diſpoſed than ſhe uſed to be to ſhew us all kindneſs, and really

ſeemed

ſeemed concerned for my father's death. She made us all a preſent for mourning; and uſed to invite us often to the Hall, and I believe would have taken us to live there if Mrs. Lennard would have let her. But that good for nothing old woman, who had her own purpoſes to anſwer by it, would never leave any of us a moment alone with Mrs. Rayland—who often ſeemed to have an inclination to ſpeak to my mother, and to be checked in what ſhe intended to ſay by the preſence of Lennard, who, in proportion as the old lady became more feeble through age, and as her mind became weaker, ſeemed to acquire over her more power: though it often appeared to me that Mrs. Rayland ſubmitted to it rather from habit than from choice, and had not reſolution to throw off a yoke ſhe had been accuſtomed to ſo many years—"

"But, my Selina," cried Orlando, "you have not all this while ſaid a word of Monimia."

"We contrived to meet," replied Selina, "every Monday, according to your injunction;

junction; except when my poor father lay so dangerously ill, and after his death. And though these short interviews were passed almost always in tears on both sides, they were the only pleasure we either of us tasted; and we have often said, that the consolation of the rest of the week was, that Monday would return at the beginning of the next!

" I missed meeting Monimia for three weeks, for the melancholy reason I have assigned; and on the fourth I hastened, at the usual hour, to the place of our appointment, the bench near the boat-house, where I saw Monimia waiting for me. If my mourning and dejected looks struck her with concern, I was not less shocked to see her look so very pale, thin, and dejected—We could neither of us speak for some time, for our tears choked us, till at length she recovered voice enough to say, with deep sobs that seemed almost to burst her heart, that she should never see me more; that even this little comfort of meeting by stealth was denied her; for that her

her aunt had determined to ſend her away, and to put her apprentice to a perſon who kept an haberdaſher's and milliner's ſhop at Wincheſter, who had agreed to take her for a ſmall premium, and that ſhe was to go in two days.

"Amazed and diſtreſſed by this intelligence, I enquired why her aunt would do this? and ſhe told me, that the importunity of Sir John Belgrave, and his perpetual attempts to ſee her by the ſame means by which you had formerly found acceſs to her room, compelled her, in order to avoid him, to tell her aunt of the door in the turret; and after enduring a great deal of very cruel uſage, and having been repeatedly threatened with Mrs. Rayland's diſpleaſure and with being turned out of the houſe, her aunt firſt removed her into her room; and then, finding that inconvenient, had the door in the lower room at the botom of the ſtairs bricked up, and Monimia returned to her former apartment—from whence ſhe was hardly ever ſuffered to ſtir out but for a walk in the park, and even then

then was ordered not to go out of ſight of the houſe. So that it had always been at a great riſk that, while we did meet, ſhe uſed to run as far as the fir-wood on thoſe mornings.—" My aunt," ſaid poor Monimia as ſhe told me all this, " my aunt was always very cruel to me; but now ſhe was much more ſo than ever; for the ſtrange and ridiculous fancy ſhe had taken to Roker, who now lived almoſt always in the houſe, though Mrs. Rayland did not know it, made her jealous of every body, but particularly of me, who deteſted the man ſo much that I was quite as deſirous to avoid him, as ſhe was that I ſhould not meet him—while the odious fellow affected to be jealous of her attachment to me, though all the time he took every opportunity of ſpeaking to me very impertinently; but between my aunt's watchfulneſs that I ſhould never be in the room with him, and my own to ſhun him, I eſcaped tolerably well from his inſolent ſpeeches, and never regretted my confinement, unleſs when I feared, my dear Selina,

Selina, it would prevent my ſeeing you.—Now, however, for ſome reaſon or other, my aunt has taken it into her head that I ſhall not ſtay at the Hall any longer.—I cannot gueſs why I am more obnoxious to her than formerly, as ſhe ſeems to have ſettled to marry and ſecure her dear Mr. Roker to herſelf, unleſs it is becauſe Mrs. Rayland ſeems lately to grow more fond of me; and as my aunt is engaged with her lover more than with her miſtreſs, I have been more about her, and ſhe ſeems always ſatisfied with my ſervices—which makes Mrs. Lennard quite in a rage with me ſometimes; and often of late ſhe tells me I am a ſly, deceitful girl, and ſhe'll blow me up with her lady—ſuch is her expreſſion, if I dare to fancy that I have any intereſt with her. This ſhe has repeated ſo often lately, that knowing as I do that the diſcovery ſhe has made of my meeting Orlando would entirely ruin him with Mrs. Rayland, I think that, however dreadful it is, Selina, for me to leave this place, where only I can have an opportu-

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nity of weeping with you and talking of him, I had much better do ſo than hazard, by my ſtay, incurring my aunt's unreaſonable diſpleaſure, ſince it may ſo much hurt Orlando;—and as ſhe told me again, about ten days ſince, that ſhe was determined to ſend me off to Wincheſter, and had given her lady ſuch good reaſons for it that ſhe adviſed it, and had promiſed to give me the apprentice fee, I anſwered, that I had rather go than be burthenſome to her.—So ſhe wrote immediately, and the anſwer came yeſterday, which fixes my departure for next Thurſday." Thus, my dear brother, our dear injured Monimia related to me the circumſtances which had produced this reſolution, ſo diſtreſſing to me. Some of them indeed, particularly what related to that hateful Sir John Belgrave, I had heard before; for he uſed not only to perſecute poor Monimia with attempts to ſpeak to her by means of a ſervant—Jacob I think ſhe called him—who was unluckily let into the ſecret, but wrote to her continually letters which, from the high promiſes

mifes they contained, might have tempted many young women fo uncomfortably fituated as fhe was—" Eternal curfes light on him!" exclaimed Orlando; " he fhall feel, the fcoundrel fhall feel, that fhe is not now fo unprotected as to fuffer him to make his infulting propofals with impunity."

Alarmed by his vehemence, Selina repented that fhe had faid fo much; yet, by way of palliation, added—" The laft letter Monimia fhewed me . . . ."

" Why did fhe open—why receive his d——d letters?" cried Orlando.

" They were forced upon her," anfwered his fifter, " in a thoufand ways, which I hope fhe will one day have an opportunity of telling you herfelf, though it would take up too much time were I to do it now.—However, I am fure that when fhe related to me how fhe was befet with them, I faw no caufe at all to blame her; and as for the laft letter, of which I was going to fpeak, it was fent in form under cover of one to

her:

her aunt, and contained a propofal of marriage."

"Of marriage!"

"Yes indeed, and even offered fettlements—and begged pardon for his former ill behaviour: it was after Monimia was obliged to complain to Mrs. Lennard of his behaviour, and was removed to her room. And one great caufe of her aunt's difpleafure afterwards was, that Monimia pofitively refufed to marry Sir John, which her aunt infifted that, if he was in earneft, fhe fhould do. Monimia, however, wrote to him a refufal, in the moft pofitive terms we could invent together; and after that fhe heard no more of him till fhe left the Hall."

"Well," faid Orlando; "but, for Heaven's fake tell me! has fhe heard of him then fince fhe left the Hall?—and where is fhe now?"

"Would to God, my deareft brother," replied Selina, "that I could tell you!—We fettled to correfpond, not without fome difficulty, becaufe, though my mother herfelf, if

if I had dared to tell her the truth, would not I am ſure have refuſed to let me write to and hear from her, yet as I did not dare, and ſhe knows I have no correſpondents but my ſiſter Philippa, who now and then writes to me from Ireland, it is very natural for her to aſk what letter I receive. However, I contrived it, and did for you, Orlando, what worlds ſhould not bribe me to do for myſelf; I mean, deceive my mother, or rather act without her knowledge; yet I hope it was innocent."

"Not only innocent, but meritorious," ſaid Orlando warmly; "but you ſtill do not anſwer me, Selina, were is Monimia now?"

"Alas! Orlando, have I not already undergone the pain of telling you that I do not know?"

"Not know!"

"Indeed, I do not.—Amidſt all the wretched ſcenes I paſſed through upon Mrs. Rayland's death—our very cruel diſappointment in reading a will, ſo unlike what we were taught to expect—and Philip's

lip's horrible conduct, which drove us from the country, and from our father's house, now sold, with every thing almost in it, to Mr. Stockton:—amidst all the exertions I was compelled to make to support my poor mother, who seemed to be sinking under our complicated misfortunes; misfortunes rendered almost insupportable, by the dreadful increase of our fears for your life:—believe me, Orlando, amidst all this, I never forgot to write punctually, according to our agreement, to our beloved Monimia; and for some time she punctually answered my letters:—but for these last five weeks never having any letter from her, I grew very uneasy, and last week wrote to the person with whom her aunt had placed her, and a few days since I had an answer."

"What answer?" enquired Orlando, with breathless eagerness.

"None from the person herself to whom my sweet friend was bound, but from a relation of hers, who informed me that Mrs. Newill had, in consequence of some embarrassment in her affairs, left Winchester, and

was

was gone to London with her apprentice, where ſhe was under the neceſſity of remaining concealed till her affairs were ſettled; and then propoſed going into buſineſs in London, if ſhe could find friends to ſet her up."

"Diſtraction and death!" cried Orlando, ſtriking his hands together, and ſtarting from his chair, "I ſhall be driven to phrenſy!—And is it to a perſon thus ſituated that my poor Monimia is entruſted? and, under the pretence of becoming an apprentice, is ſhe given up to a mean ſervitude? or perhaps ſold to that deteſtable Belgrave, by her neceſſitous miſtreſs? But I will purſue him to the end of the world.—Good God!" added he, walking quickly about the room, "if ſomething very dreadful had not happened to her, ſhe would have written to you—ſurely, Selina, ſhe would have written, wherever ſituated."

"Perhaps," replied Selina, ſtill more apprehenſive of the effects of that deſpair he ſeemed to feel at this account—"perhaps her not having written may have been

owing to her having never received that letter of mine, which contained a direction whither to write to me."

"What direction?" enquired Orlando.

"To this houſe," replied his ſiſter, "where we have only been about a month; having got it cheap of a gentleman who was obliged to go abroad, and was glad to let it on reaſonable terms, for the few remaining months of his leaſe. We were before in lodgings in Holles-Street, and I knew nothing of our removal hither till a few days before it happened. The moment I did, I wrote to Monimia; but that letter was among thoſe ſhe never received."

This converſation, in which the impatient anguiſh of Orlando only found increaſe, was now interrupted by the entrance of his youngeſt ſiſter, who came down to tell him and Selina that Mrs. Somerive, hearing them talk below, and ſuppoſing the melancholy account Selina had to give Orlando might affect him too much, entreated him to put off any farther converſation till the

next

next day, but for the prefent to take fome refrefhment and go to bed.

Orlando, vexed that the agitation of his mind had betrayed him into vehemence which had alarmed and diftreffed his mother, promifed to obey; and endeavouring to ftifle his torments, he confented to fit down to fupper, and requefted that he might fee his mother, and endeavour to calm the inquietude fhe expreffed for his health. She defired he would come up to her; but when he approached the bed, he could not fpeak to her—he could only take the hand fhe gave him, and bathe it with tears, in fpite of his endeavours to check them, as he preffed it to his lips. In a broken voice, however, he at length collected refolution enough to affure her, in anfwer to her tender enquiries, that it was true he had been much affected by the detail his fifter had at his own requeft given him, yet that he was now recovered, and after a night's reft fhould regain fortitude enough to confider his own fituation, and what it was beft to do, without fhrinking from any tafk, by

executing

executing which he would contribute to her comfort. His mother bleſſed him—and, expreſſing the utmoſt ſolicitude about his health, ſaid—" Make yourſelf, dear Orlando, eaſy about me; for, after ſo great, ſo unexpected, and I fear ſo undeſerved a bleſſing as having you reſtored to me, and to your dear ſiſters, I ſhould be unthankful and unworthy of ſuch happineſs if I dared to murmur."

As the repoſe of Mrs. Somerive would not, Orlando thought, be much promoted by the continuance of this affecting converſation, he ſhortened it as much as he could, and, in purſuance of his promiſe, went, in hopes of tranſient forgetfulneſs, to his bed.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

IF Orlando had known Monimia was in ſafety—if he had known where, after this cruel abſence, he might find her, and aſſure her of the ſentiments of an heart more fondly then ever devoted to her, all the cruel circumſtances that had happened in his abſence would have been ſupportable; but when, in addition to the death of his father, and the diſperſion of his family, his loſs of the Rayland eſtate, and the ruin of his brother (for, being now utterly undone, and unable to carry on the law-ſuits he had begun, he had for ſome time diſappeared, and no one knew what was become of him)—when to all theſe diſtracting certainties was added his fear of finding Monimia, or finding her innocent, lovely, and devoted to him, as he had left her; he was no longer

able to check the violence of his apprehenſion; nor could he, for ſome hours after awaking from his ſhort and diſturbed ſleep, collect his thoughts enough to form any plan for his future conduct.

Two things, however, were immediately neceſſary: one was, to find ſome method of tracing his loſt Monimia; and the other, to find the means of ſubſiſting, not only without being a burthen to his mother, whoſe income was ſo very ſmall, but to endeavour if poſſible to make hers and his ſiſter's ſituation more comfortable. This he knew the ſlender pay of an enſign would not enable him to do; and, while he knew that nothing could be more dreadful to his mother than the idea of his going abroad again, he felt that few means of paſſing his time would to him be ſo diſagreeable as that of remaining unoccupied, and diſarmed as he was by his parole, while he yet called and conſidered himſelf as a ſoldier.

He at length determined to enquire how far, as his commiſſion was given him, he could diſpoſe of it; and if that could be

be done, to put the money it would produce into ſome buſineſs. But even this arrangement was ſecondary to his ardent deſire to gain ſome intelligence of Monimia. He wrote as ſoon as he aroſe in the morning to the relation of the perſon with whom ſhe lived at Wincheſter, entreating a direction to that perſon, and aſſuring her to whom he wrote, that his inquiry was not meant to do any injury, but rather might produce ſome advantage to the perſon under inconvenient circumſtances. He then, after ſome deliberation, determined to write to Mrs. Lennard, or, as ſhe was now called, Mrs. Roker;—and, as he had now no longer any thing to fear from the reſentment of his benefactreſs, he openly avowed to Mrs. Roker the purpoſe of his enquiry; informing her that, if her niece was unmarried, and ſtill retained for him her former affection, he intended to offer her his hand.

Having thus taken all the means which his anxiety immediately ſuggeſted, he joined his mother and ſiſters at breakfaſt with ſome degree of apparent compoſure,

 and

and gave them, as he found his mother now better able to bear it, a ſketch of his adventures upon the road; at which they were ſo much affected, that he ſoon found it neceſſary to drop the converſation; and ſaying he ſhould walk out till dinner, he took his way to a coffee-houſe much frequented by military men, near St. James's, where he hoped to hear ſomething of Warwick, as well as to learn whether the General (whom he dared not mention to his mother leſt it ſhould occaſion enquiries about Iſabella which he could not anſwer) had conſoled himſelf with ſome other young woman for his cruel mortification in regard to Iſabella, and revenged himſelf by diſinheriting his nephew for the loſs of his intended bride.

He met ſeveral of his old acquaintance; one of whom very willingly gave him all the information he wanted about his commiſſion; but told him that he could not, he thought, diſpoſe of it without applying to General Tracy, from whoſe hands he had received it. This Orlando determined to

do;

do; and as he was impatient to be at fome certainty, he went immediately to his houfe in Grofvenor-Place.

It happened that the General, who was now almoft always a martyr to the gout, had given orders to be denied to every body who might chance to call, except two perfons whom he named, and for one of whom the man who opened the door, and who had only lately come into the houfe, miftook Orlando, who was therefore ufhered up ftairs, where, in a magnificent room, the General fat in a great chair, fupported by pillows, and his limbs wrapped in flannel. Orlando was much altered, and the General was near-fighted; fo that he was obliged to approach, and to announce himfelf. Forgetting for a moment his difabled limbs, Tracy almoft ftarted out of his chair; but then recollecting probably that a man of fafhion fhould never fuffer himfelf to appear difcompofed at any thing, he recovered himfelf, and coldly defired Orlando to fit down.

Orlando, affected by feeing a man whom

he had last seen as a guest of his father, gave, in a mild and low voice, into a little history of his adventures; the parole he had given, which precluded him from serving during the present war; and his wish therefore to transfer his commission to some one who might not be under the same disadvantages.

General Tracy heard him with repulsive indifference, and then said—"Well, Sir, the commission is yours, and you are perfectly at liberty to keep or to dispose of it.—I am very far from meaning to trouble you with my advice; but as your expectations of Mrs. Rayland's fortune are all disappointed, I should have supposed a profession might have been found useful to you. However, Sir, you are the best judge. The commission is yours—I am sorry I am too much indisposed to have the pleasure of your company longer, and I wish you a good day." He then rang, and his valet appearing, he bade him open the door.

Orlando, thus dismissed, retired in anger, which he had no means of venting;

and went back to the coffee-houſe, where his friend waited for him, to whom he forbore, however, to ſpeak of Tracy's behaviour; becauſe he could not but feel that if he believed him, as he probably did, concerned in the elopement of Iſabella with Warwick, he had ſome grounds for his reſentment—a reſentment which, when Orlando reflected on his humiliation, and his being now tormented by bodily infirmities, he was too generous not to forgive. His friend, a lieutenant in the 51ſt, now went with him to the office of an agent, to treat about his commiſſion; and, as they went, related to him, that it was believed at the War-office, Warwick had periſhed at ſea, as there never was an inſtance of a man's being miſſing for ſo many months; and that, had he been taken priſoner by an American or French privateer, and carried to ſome of their places of rendezvous, he would before now have written home, or he would have been exchanged. This appeared to be but too probable; but ſtill Orlando, in recollecting how he had been

situated himself, entertained a faint hope that they might yet hear of his friend and his sister, though the dangers and difficulties to which the latter might have been exposed made him tremble. Having put his business in the proper train, he returned home, meditating, as he went, on all the strange and disagreeable occurrences that had happened since he used to traverse these streets with Warwick, who had lodgings in Bond-street.—All the scenes he had passed through arose in lively succession in his mind, and that for the first time since his landing in England; for the shocks he received on his arrival at Rayland Hall, and by hearing of the death of his father, had for a while absorbed all other recollections.—He now considered that, when his commission was disposed of, his whole fortune would be only between three and four hundred pounds; yet, with the sanguine spirit of a young man, which his former severe disappointments had not checked, he believed that, with a sum so moderate, he could, by dint of perse-

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verance and induſtry, find ſome reputable employment, by which he might not only be enabled to aſſiſt his mother, but to keep a wife—as he was reſolved, the moment he could find Monimia, to marry her; and in this only he thought he might be forgiven for not conſulting his mother— to his duty and affection towards whom he never meant that any other attachment ſhould be injurious.

He had not yet had time to talk to Selina, of the law-ſuit which he heard Philip had inſtituted for the recovery of the Rayland eſtate; but he had in the evening an opportunity of talking about it to Selina, and heard that it now languiſhed, partly for want of money, and partly through Philip's neglect, who had of late again diſappeared, and therefore nothing was likely to be made of the ſuit.

Orlando enquired againſt whom, and on what grounds it was begun?—and learned, though Selina did not very clearly underſtand the terms, that it was againſt the reverend body who claimed the eſtate,

one of whom (Doctor Hollybourn) had administered as executor; because the will nominated to that office the dean of the diocese for the time being, to which the doctor had succeeded a few days only before Mrs. Rayland's death; and that there was not only a suit at common law, but in chancery.

As there was great reason to believe that there was another will entirely in his favour, which had been either secreted or destroyed, Orlando determined to attempt discovering this, and got a recommendation from his friend the lieutenant (for he was too much disgusted by the reception he met with from Mr. Woodford to trouble him again) to a young attorney, before whom he laid the affair, and who gave him great encouragement to pursue it.

But the occupation in which this engaged him, or in which he was engaged by the sale of his commission, that was now within a few days of being completed, could not for a moment detach his mind from those fears which continually haunted him for Monimia.

Monimia.—He waited with anxiety for the anſwer he expected from Wincheſter, which he had hoped to have, as he had very earneſtly preſſed for it, by the return of the poſt; but that, and another, and another poſt arrived without any letter; and he wrote again, waited again three days, and was again diſappointed of an anſwer.—He now determined to go down himſelf, and find out the woman from whom Selina had received the information of Monimia's removal; but, the day on which he had hired an horſe, and was on the point of ſetting out for that place, he was viſited by a man of between fifty and ſixty, who ſent in his name, in great form, as Mr. Roker.

If a painter had occaſion to put upon his canvas a figure that ſhould give an horrible idea of the worſt, meaneſt, and moſt obnoxious paſſions—and to repreſent the moſt deteſtable character in Pandæmonium, where, on the brow, villany ſits enjoying the miſery it occaſions—where every raſcal vice, concealed by cowardice and cunning, are mingled with arrogance, malice, and cruelty

cruelty—where a noſe, the rival of Bardolph's, depends over a mouth "grinning horribly a ghaſtly ſmile,"—and ſcornful eyes, aſkance, ſeemed to be watching, with inverted looks, the birth of chicanery in the brain—this fiend-like wretch would have been a fine ſtudy. His ſhambling figure appeared to have been repaired with ſtraw and rags, ſince it had ſuffered depredations on a well-earned gibbet—A figure more adapted to the purpoſe of ſcaring crows, was never exhibited in former days as Guy Vaux, the Pope, or the Pretender.

Orlando was ſomewhat ſurpriſed to behold this ſtrange being, who, ſtrutting up cloſe to him, put his noſe almoſt in his face, and then, in a ſonorous voice, ſaid——

"Your name, Sir, is Somerive?"

"I ſuppoſe you know it is," replied Orlando, "ſince you come to ſeek me by it."

"You wrote, Sir, to my nephew's wife, Mrs. Rachel Roker—"

"Well, Sir, and I expected Mrs. Rachel Roker would have anſwered my letter."

"No, Sir—We make it a rule never put

put our hands to any thing—We desire to know, Sir, your reasons for writing—I call, Sir, in behalf of Mrs. Rachel Roker—You ask after a young woman, Sir, whom she kept out of charity—Now, Sir, though we never do give answers to matters so irrelevant, my client, that is my niece, Mrs. Rachel Roker, does hereby inform you, that she the said Rachel—"

"Orlando, anxious as he was, and trembling in the expectation of hearing something of Monimia, could not check his indignation and impatience—"Your niece! your client!—What is all this to me?" said he.

"Sir," cried the fiend, "have patience if you please—I go on in this matter according to the due course, and such as I always observe in all my business, whether it relates to Sir John Winnerton Weezle, Baronet, my very worthy client, or any other. Now, Sir,—Nay, Sir—(seeing Orlando about to speak)—nay, Sir, hear me! and when I have done, Sir, you shall speak in turn—"

"You

"You will be pleafed then," faid Orlando, "to be brief, as patience is not my forte."

He felt much difpofed to prove this affertion by turning the fellow down ftairs; but, recollecting that he might thus lofe all trace of Monimia, which her aunt might otherwife afford him, he checked himfelf: and the man proceeded in an harangue of fome length, tending to give an high opinion of his abilities, and of his fkill in conducting caufes; laying much ftrefs on the confidence with which he was treated by Sir John Winnerton Weezle, Baronet, and his brother Thomas Weezle, Efquire, who feemed to have taken, from their rank, great hold on his imagination: and he at length concluded with faying, that the girl Orlando enquired after had behaved moft ungratefully, to his niece Mrs. Rachel Roker, and had contemptuoufly refufed to marry advantageoufly, to a Baronet, a man of great rank, Sir John Berkely Belgrave, Baronet;—an acquaintance of his client, and very good friend, Sir John Winnerton

Weezle,

Weezle, Baronet, and Thomas Weezle, Esquire, his brother:—wherefore Mrs. Rachel Roker had discarded her; and the person to whom she was bound apprentice was now a prisoner for debt in some of the London prisons, and this girl had left her for another service, nobody knowing whither she was gone."

This account almost drove Orlando to distraction. From the man's coming himself on a message with which he had so little to do; and from several other observations he made while he was talking, it seemed as if he had some particular reason for wishing to put an end to all farther enquiry on the part of Orlando—who now, stifling his detestation, asked if he could not see Mrs. Roker, formerly Mrs. Lennard? The attorney said, No! that she was not only at a great distance from London, but kept her bed, and saw nobody. In the course of these enquiries, which he now insisted upon some answer to, he found that this Roker and his nephew were employed by the reverend body of clergy to defend their right

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to the Rayland eſtate againſt Philip Somerive; and it was eaſy to ſee, that the arrival of Orlando in England was the thing in the world theſe worthy gentlemen the leaſt expected and the leaſt wiſhed.—

When this hateful being was gone, Orlando, after a moment's reflection, reſolved upon viſiting all thoſe receptacles of miſery in London where poverty is puniſhed by loſs of liberty, and where, in a land eminent for its humanity, many thouſands either periſh, or are rendered by confinement and deſperation unfit to return to ſociety—where vice and misfortune are confounded, and patient wretchedneſs languiſhes unpitied, unrelieved, unknown—while villany ſhews that, if there is money to ſupport it, it will triumph in deſpite of puniſhment.

Selina knew the name of the perſon—Mrs. Newill, to whom Monimia had been conſigned; and Orlando, making a memorandum of it in his pocket-book, with ſuch other circumſtances as might lead to a diſcovery, ſet out on his melancholy ſearch.

He had now been near a fortnight in London,

London, and had in a great meaſure recovered his looks—ſo that he was no longer a ſtranger to the few acquaintance he had: and his mother beheld with ſatisfaction the ſame Orlando, on whoſe fine figure and ingenuous countenance ſhe had formerly ſo fondly prided herſelf.

His firſt viſit was to the Fleet-priſon—He enquired of every one likely to inform him, if the perſon whom he named to them was there? But miſtruſt ſeemed univerſal in that ſcene of legal wretchedneſs; and, with an heart bleeding at the thoughts of there being ſuch complicated miſeries, and that man had the power to inflict them on his fellow-creatures, he almoſt wiſhed himſelf again among the cypreſs ſwamps and pathleſs woods of uncultivated America, that he might fly from the *legal* crimes to which ſuch ſcenes were owing; when, indulging this mournful train of thought, he quitted the priſon, and walked ſlowly up Holborn Hill.

There was a crowd juſt before he reached St. Andrew's church, and ſeveral coaches ſtood

ſtood at the door of an haberdaſher's ſhop. In making his way by them, a female figure, very ſmartly and ſomewhat tawdrily dreſt, took his arm and cried—"Ah, Sir! your name is Mr. Orlando Somerive?" "It is, indeed," replied Orlando; "but I do not know, Madam, how I deſerve the honour of your being acquainted with it."

"What! have you forgot me then?" ſaid the lady: "Lord! how ſoon old acquaintance are forgot!"

Orlando then thought he knew the voice, and had ſome recollection of the face; but he ſtill heſitated, unable to remember where he had heard or ſeen either.—"Have you far to go?" ſaid ſhe, ſtill detaining him:—"I have a carriage here, and can put you down—Lord! why, have you really forgot Betſy Richards?"

Orlando now immediately recollected his former acquaintance, and what he had heard of her being entertained as a miſtreſs by Philip occurred to him: as he had been very ſolicitous ever ſince his return to ſee his brother, he now eagerly enquired where

he

he was. " Ah, Lord!" cried the girl, ſhaking her head, " I have but very ſo ſo news to tell you about him, that's the truth—But, dear! one can't talk of them ſort of things in the ſtreet—why, I ſhan't bite you, Sir—you may as well get into the coach with me." Orlando, though unwilling to be ſeen with ſuch a companion, yet, on finding ſhe could give him ſome information of his brother, determined to accept the offer; and the lady, who called herſelf Miſtreſs Filmer, then ordered her carriage to advance: and Orlando ſeated himſelf by her, in an hired chariot with a black boy in a turban and feathers behind.

Though he was perſuaded nobody knew him, he was very much aſhamed of the equipage; but, applying himſelf immediately to learn of his fair companion what he ſo much wiſhed to know, he liſtened to her very attentively—and, after ſome circumlocution in a ſtyle peculiar to herſelf, he learned with inexpreſſible concern that his brother Philip was a priſoner, for a debt of an hundred and twenty pounds, in the

place

place he had juſt been viſiting; and that Mrs. Filmer, though now under the protection of another perſon, yet retained ſo much recollection of her firſt ſeducer, and ſo much gratitude for the ſums he had laviſhed upon her, that ſhe had that morning been to viſit him, and only ſtopped in Holborn to make ſome purchaſes before ſhe went to her lodgings in Charlotte-Street.

Orlando could not bear to hear that his unhappy brother was in ſuch a place, without going immediately to him. He ſtaid only, therefore, a moment longer to enquire of Mrs. Filmer, if ſhe had, when ſhe was in the country with his brother (for they had not long before, ſhe ſaid, been down at Stockton's together), heard what was become of Monimia. She would have rallied him on his conſtancy, but he could not a moment endure to be trifled with; and, finding ſhe knew nothing of importance, he ſaid he recollected ſome material buſineſs in the city, whither he muſt return. —Then, ſtopping the chariot, he wiſhed

her

her a good day, and haftened back to the Fleet-prifon.

On enquiry for the perfon he wanted, he ftill found fome difficulty in being admitted to him: but, on fignifying that he was brother to Mr. Somerive, which his refemblance to him immediately confirmed, a turnkey, to whom he gave a fhilling, walked before him to the apartment where Philip was confined.

On his entrance, the neglected and altered figure of his brother ftruck him with the deepeft concern—He was fitting at piquet with another prifoner, on a dirty table, where fome empty porter pots feemed to fignify that they had lately taken their dinner. Philip hardly looked up; and Orlando ftood a moment unnoticed, till the man who was with him cried—" Why, 'fquire, here's your honour's brother."

" The devil it is!" replied Philip—" By the Lord, though, but—let me fee—It is he!—why, haft had a refurrection, my honeft Rowland?—Thou wert killed and fcalped, I thought, by the Cherokees."

"I almoſt wiſh I had, Philip," anſwered Orlando, "for I think I ſhould have preferred death to what I now ſee."

"Why, to be ſure, pleaſanter ſights may be ſeen if a man is in luck—For example, it would have been pleaſanter for thee to have come home maſter of Rayland Hall—Eh! Sir Knight?"

"Good God!" exclaimed Orlando, "will you never, my brother, be reaſonable? Will you never believe that, notwithſtanding your repeated unkindneſs to me, I can never conſider you otherwiſe than as my brother, and can have no motive in coming hither but to do you good?"

"And what good canſt do me? Canſt let me out of this cage? Haſt brought any money from the Yankies? any plunder, my little ſoldier? Canſt lend me the ready to pay this confounded debt?"

The perſon who was with Orlando, now ſuppoſing they might be upon buſineſs, left them together; and Philip finding from the generous earneſtneſs of Orlando, that though he had very little money (in fact no

more

more than the price of his commiffion, which he was to receive in a few days), he was willing to pay his debt, and to fhare with him all that he fhould then have left, began to grow more civil to his brother, and did not refufe to lay before him, though his pride feemed cruelly mortified as he did it, the ftate of his affairs.

CHAP. VII.

THE unfortunate brother of Orlando now related to him, that though his actual debts were very great, the ſum he was at preſent confined for was not much above ninety pounds; and his arreſt was at the ſuit of the very attorney whom he had been perſuaded by Stockton to employ—a young and inexperienced man; who having, without knowing what he was about, led his client into very heavy expences, had been, as it ſeemed, bribed by Roker to abandon him; and now, without returning his papers, had arreſted him. Orlando, inexperienced as he ſtill was in the miſerable chicane with which our laws are diſgraced and counteracted, yet knew that this could not be right, and that ſome means might be fouud to procure at leaſt the

the papers ſuch a man detained—This he promiſed his brother he would do, and take every neceſſary meaſure for his ſpeedy releaſe. He then gave Philip all the money he had in his pocket; and, leaving him with an heavy heart, returned home, not only diſappointed in his ſearch after Monimia, but that diſappointment embittered by the diſcovery he had made of his brother's ſituation, whom, now that he was in diſtreſs and in priſon, Orlando forgave for all the calamities he had brought on his family, and for all the ill offices which jealouſy had excited him to be guilty of againſt himſelf.

Yet, to his mother he dared not ſpeak of Philip; for, though ſhe at preſent ſuffered extreme anguiſh in believing her ſon had forſaken her, after having ſo largely contributed to the diſperſion and ruin of his family, ſhe would, he knew, be quite overwhelmed by the intelligence that he was in priſon. She had already in bitterneſs of heart experienced—

"How ſharper than a ſerpent's tooth it is
"To have a thankleſs child."

But ſtill that half-broken heart had all the tenderneſs of a mother within it for this her eldeſt child, on whom, during his early years, her fondeſt affections were fixed—and Orlando well knew that the miſery he had thus brought upon himſelf would add an incurable wound to thoſe which his mother had already received.

But, though he endeavoured to conceal the extreme dejection of his ſpirits on his return, his mother immediately perceived that ſomething had more than uſual diſturbed him. He told her, however, in anſwer to her anxious enquiries, that he had been embarraſſed by the delays of office in regard to the ſale of his commiſſion; and as ſoon as he could quit her without exciting anew her apprehenſions, he left the houſe, and ſet out to execute, as far as he could that evening, his promiſe to his brother, telling his mother and his ſiſters that he ſhould not be at home to ſupper.

Baffled in his firſt attempt to find Mrs. Newill,

Newill, who was the only perfon from whom he could hope to hear any intelligence of Monimia, new terrors affailed him; and he thought that, amidft the moft dreary hours he had paffed in the wilds of America, and among men who have little more rationality than the animals of their defert, he had never fuffered fuch wretchednefs as he now felt; for, then, though he was expofed to almoft every perfonal inconvenience, and uncertain whether he fhould ever again revifit his native country, he fancied Monimia was in fafety; but now, every evil that could furround defencelefs innocence, and unprotected beauty, was inceffantly reprefented to his imagination; and, in proportion as time elapfed without his being able to gain any intelligence of her, his defpair became intolerable—Yet other duties, indifpenfable duties, demanded his attention, and interrupted his purfuit, which alone could relieve his mind, by keeping alive his hopes of finding her.

His new friend, the young attorney,

whose name was Carr, told him that he would instantly set about procuring the release of his brother Philip; and if, as he believed, any illegal proceeding had occurred in his confinement, Fisherton, the attorney who was the cause of it, would perhaps be compelled by a little spirit to lower his demands—" I know this man well," said Carr, " and know that nothing but his impudence can equal his ignorance. *That other honour to our profession*, Roker, is well versed in chicane, and knows more of the law, or rather of its abuse, than an honest man would wish to know; but Fisherton is so ignorant that, while his lavish expences continually reduce him to necessities that drive him into bold attempts at robbery, his skill in managing them is so inferior that he is almost always baffled, and has been more than once exposed."

" How then does he contrive to live?" said Orlando: " I learn from Philip that he has a house in town, another in the country, and entertains his clients splendidly at both; and that, in his common discourse, he

he talks as if he was a man of great property."

"Oh! as to that," anſwered Mr. Carr, "he has had a conteſted election for a Weſtern borough to carry on for a Nabob; and ſince, a proceſs to defend for the ſame worthy perſonage in Doctors Commons—This comfortable client has been ſuppoſed his principal ſupport for ſome time; and it is wonderful how his wild boaſting, in which there is not a ſyllable of truth, impoſes upon the world—He is ſuch a man as Shakeſpeare ſomewhere deſcribes—

"A gentleman who loves to hear himſelf talk, and "will ſpeak more in an hour than he'll ſtand to in a "month."

—I am heartily ſorry your brother has got into the hands and into the debt of this yelping fellow; who, even if he could prevail upon himſelf to be honeſt, is always from ignorance on a wrong ſcent. However, we muſt get him out of ſo ſad a ſcrape as well as we can; and as all your elder brother's proceedings have been wrong and will only mar ours ſince that wretched

Roker has purchafed his *Solicitor* (for every pettyfogging fellow is now, not an attorney, but a folicitor), we muft begin again, and file a bill of difcovery againft the younger Roker and his wife."

Orlando then preffed his friend (whom he thought a man of talents, and who had all the appearance of being honeft without profeffing it) to fet about the releafe of his brother immediately.—This he willingly agreed to, and faid he would inftantly go about it to one of the perfons concerned, who lived alfo in Clement's Inn—"I fhall not be gone a quarter of an hour," faid Carr: "Perhaps you would like to ftay till my return—here is a newfpaper, if you will amufe yourfelf with that; but books I have none, but law books, which I fuppofe you have no tafte for."—Orlando affured him that his mind was not in a ftate to receive amufement from any of the ufual refources; and entreated him to go inftantly about Philip's bufinefs, and allow him to wait in his chambers till his return.

Carr departed; and Orlando fat for a moment,

moment, his eyes fixed on the fire, in sad contemplation, of which Monimia was the principal object. The clerk brought him in candles (for he and Carr had conversed by fire-light) and the newspaper; but he was too much occupied by his private distresses to be able to attend to public occurrences, interesting as they were at that period to every Englishman, and particularly to one who had seen what Orlando had seen, of the war then raging with new violence in America.

He read, however, in a lingering expectation of hearing of Warwick, which never wholly forsook him, the list of the killed and wounded in an engagement or rather skirmish which was related in that paper; and when he read that the American soldiers, fighting in defence of their liberties (of all those *rights* which his campaign as a British officer had not made him forget were the most sacred to an *Englishman*), had marked their route with the blood which flowed from their naked feet in walking over frozen ground, his heart felt for

the ſufferings of the oppreſſed and for the honour of the oppreſſors *.

But from the contemplation of both, his private miſeries recalled him—In laying down the newſpaper on a long deſk that was in the room, he caſt his eyes accidentally on ſome of the bundles of papers that were ranged on it, tied with red tape, and ſaw on one—Bagſhaw v. Fleming. The name of Fleming inſtantly brought to his mind his regretted friend the lieutenant, and his heart as inſtantly reproached him with breach of promiſe, and want of gratitude, in not having ſooner enquired after the family of the lieutenant, who had with his laſt breath recommended them to his friendſhip. Nor could he forgive himſelf for his neglect; though a mind of leſs generous ſenſibility might eaſily have found excuſes in the multiplicity of more immediate claims and family diſ-

* The peruſal of the hiſtory of the American Revolution, of Ramſay, is humbly recommended to thoſe Engliſhmen who doubt whether, in defence of their freedom, any other nation but their own will fight, or conquer.

treſſes

treſſes which had overwhelmed him on his return to England.

When Carr returned, he gave to Orlando a more favourable account of his miſſion than he had expected; and as ſoon as they had agreed upon what was to be done the next day to haſten the liberation of Philip Somerive, Orlando aſked him if he had a client of the name of Fleming? Carr replied that he had, and that ſhe was a widow who was under very melancholy circumſtances: "Her huſband," added he, "was a lieutenant, killed in America, and ſhe has nothing or very little more than her penſion to live upon, with five children, all young; and is beſides involved in a ſuit by the villany of ſome of her huſband's relations, which I am defending for her."

"Good God!" cried Orlando, "it is the widow of my dear old friend, whoſe laſt breath left his gallant boſom as he, graſping my hand while I knelt on the ground ſtained with the blood which flowed in torrents from his breaſt, bade me

be a friend to his poor wife, to his orphan children—And I have neglected this, ſhamefully neglected it! and have ſelfiſhly ſuffered my own ſorrows to abſorb me quite. —Where do Mrs. Fleming and her family live?—Where can I ſee them?—If they are in town I will go to them this evening."

Carr ſmiled at the vehemence of his young friend, and ſaid, "What pity it is, Somerive, that ſuch an heart as yours ſhould ever loſe this amiable warmth, and become hackneyed in the ways of men!"

"I truſt," anſwered Orlando, "that it never will; but Carr, you do not anſwer my queſtion—does Mrs. Fleming reſide in London?"

"No," replied Carr; "ſhe is at preſent near Chriſtchurch in Hampſhire, where a friend has lent her a cottage, for ſhe is by no means in a ſituation to pay rent for ſuch a houſe as her family requires." Orlando then taking an exact direction, determined to ſee the widow of his deceaſed friend as ſoon as he had viſited the other priſons of the metropolis in ſeach of Mrs. Newill.

The

The following day, therefore, after passing some time with his brother, who appeared satisfied with the prospect of his immediate release, he went to the King's-Bench prison, and, his enquiry there being fruitless, to the other receptacles of the unhappy debtor; but no such person as a Mrs. Newill was to be heard of, and Orlando returned in deeper despair than ever.

In two days the spirit and assiduity of Mr. Carr had been so effectually exerted that Philip Somerive was released, but at the expence to Orlando of somewhat upwards of an hundred pounds, including the fees which are on these occasions paid to the satellites of our most excellent law; nor would the sum have been so moderate, but from the exertions of Carr, and his threats of exposing the conduct of Fisherton. Orlando fetched his brother away in a hackney-coach to a lodging he had provided for him; where he supplied him with present money, and where he hoped he should be able to support him till something (though he knew not what) should

happen

happen to give a fortunate turn to the affairs of their family.

Philip was penſive, ſilent, and, as Orlando hoped, penitent. He had not as yet ſpoken of him to his mother; and though the circumſtances that would have moſt ſenſibly afflicted her were now at an end, Orlando, who ſaw his mother in that ſtate of ſpirits which even the ſudden opening of a door, or any unexpected noiſe were ſufficient to overſet, dared not yet aſk her to receive and to forgive a ſon, who, though ſhe ſtill loved him, had given her ſo much cauſe of complaint—as well ſince, as before his father's death.

The whole fortune of Orlando was now reduced to about two hundred and fifty pounds; for his commiſſion did not produce him quite four. On this fortune, however, he was ſtill bent on marrying Monimia, if he could find her; and of truſting to Providence for the reſt.

A few more mornings were ſtill paſſed in fruitleſs reſearch. It was now the beginning of January; and this beginning of

Term

Term his bill was to be filed against the persons who were supposed to have any knowledge of Mrs. Rayland's having made another, and a subsequent will. It was in search of these people, of the servants who had lived with her at the time of her death; and of the lawyers who had made the will, that he was now compelled for many days longer to employ himself; every hour increasing the agony of mind with which he thought on the fate of Monimia, while all the consolation he had was in talking of her to Selina, if he could at any time steal an hour with her alone. On these occasions he wearied himself with conjecture as to what was become of her; repeated the same questions on which he had already been often satisfied; and imagined new means of tracing her, which when he pursued, served only to renew his disappointment and regret.

At length—having learned that the lawyer who made the will was dead, and his clerk who had accompanied him to Rayland Hall settled at a town in Wilt-

shire

ſhire—he reſolved, by the advice of Carr, to go thither in ſearch of him, and then to viſit the village near Chriſtchurch, where Mrs. Fleming and her family reſided. He communicated this ſcheme to his mother, who, while ſhe allowed the neceſſity of his finding a perſon whoſe evidence might be ſo very material to him, could hardly prevail upon herſelf to let him go for ten days from her; for ſo long he imagined it would be before he could return.

At length he fixed the day with her approbation, hired an horſe for the journey, and took leave of his mother and his ſiſters. He then viſited Philip, whom he found in a very ſilent, and, as he thought, ſomewhat ſullen mood. He gave him a ten pound bank note, as he complained of being without money; and, in depreſſed ſpirits, with hardly a glimpſe of hope to cheer his melancholy way, he began his journey.

The weather was ſevere; but, on the firſt night of his journey, a deep ſnow threatened to render his progreſs more ſlow,

and

and compelled him to ſtay till a late hour of the day, that the road might be beaten, for all was now a pathleſs plain, and he was a ſtranger to the road. About one o'clock, however, he left the town where he had paſſed the night, and went ſlowly on. He was inured to the cold by his abode in America; and in no haſte to get to his inn, where nothing awaited him but a ſolitary ſupper and mournful reflections.

Again he ran over in his mind every poſſible circumſtance that could rob him of Monimia—and awakened in his breaſt all the ſcorpions of diſtruſt, dread, and jealouſy; for, whatever attempts he made to conquer ſo horrible an apprehenſion, it was to Sir John Belgrave, and to the ſucceſs of his cruel artifices, that his fears moſt frequently pointed; and there were moments in which he thought, that, were a perſon before him who could tell him all he ſo ſolicitouſly deſired to know, he ſhould not have courage to aſk; for, ſhould he hear that Monimia was loſt by the infamous

famous ſeduction of ſuch a man, he believed he ſhould die on the ſpot, or loſe his reaſon in the greatneſs of his ſorrow.

It was between ten and eleven o'clock in the evening of his ſecond day's journey, that, in a wild and moory country, where extenſive heaths ſeemed to ſpread without end before him, he began to think it time to ſeek a lodging for the night. All around was dreary and ſilent; and blank, he thought, as his deſtiny. Yet he wiſhed the torpid ſenſation that being long expoſed to the cold had given to his limbs could reach his heart, which was too acutely ſenſible! In the midſt of the uniform waſte ſtood a ſmall village, the ruſtic inhabitants of which had long ſince retired to their hard beds; and every thing was as quiet in their houſes as it was around the little church that roſe beyond them. Orlando would have enquired the diſtance to the next poſt-town, but no human creature appeared, and he paſſed on; his thoughts (as he compared their peaceful ſlumbers with the ſtate of his

own.

own troubled mind) aſſuming a poetical form, in the following

SONNET.

While thus I wander, cheerleſs and unbleſt,
And find, in change of place, but change of pain;
In tranquil ſleep the village labourers reſt,
And taſte repoſe, that I purſue in vain.
Huſh'd is the hamlet now; and faintly gleam
The dying embers from the caſement low
Of the thatch'd cottage; while the moon's wan beam
Lends a new luſtre to the dazzling ſnow.
—O'er the cold waſte, amid the freezing night,
Scarce heeding whither, deſolate I ſtray:
For me! pale eye of evening! thy ſoft light
Leads to no happy home; my weary way
Ends but in dark viciſſitude of care:
I only fly from doubt—to meet deſpair.

After being near an hour longer on his horſe, he arrived at Chippenham, where the lawyer lived from whom he expected information; and going extremely fatigued to an inn, he ſent, at an early hour the following morning, to the perſon in queſtion, who immediately came; and, inviting him to his houſe for a farther diſcuſſion of the

the business, he received him there with hospitality, and answered him with candour.

This gentleman, whose name was Walterson, informed him that it was very true he, being then clerk to a Mr. Lewes, accompanied his principal to Rayland Hall, where Mr. Lewes was closetted two days with Mrs. Rayland; after which he was called upon with another person, who he thought was a tenant, or son to a tenant of Mrs. Rayland's, to witness it: but he did not hear the contents, nor know what was afterwards done with the will; relative to which every thing was conducted with great secrecy—That he was employed to engross some other writings about one of Mrs. Rayland's farms; but that he never copied the will, nor knew more of its contents than what passed in conversation afterwards between him and Mr. Lewes—who, as they travelled together to London, afterwards said, in going through the park, out at the north lodge, that he thought Rayland Hall one of the finest old places

he

he had ever ſeen; and added, ſpeaking of the Somerive family, " And I am very glad that the old lady has determined to give it to the right heirs—becauſe Mr. Somerive is a very worthy man, and that younger ſon of his a fine young fellow."—That, on ſome farther queſtions from him, Mr. Walterſon, Mr. Lewes ſpoke as if the bulk of the fortune was given to Mr. Orlando Somerive.

Orlando made minutes of what Mr. Walterſon ſaid, who aſſured him he would be ready at any time to give his teſtimony in a court of law—He in vain endeavoured to recollect the name of the perſon who was witneſs with him to the will, and whoſe information he adviſed Orlando by all means to procure; but he deſcribed him as a ſtout man, between thirty and forty, with a very florid complexion and dark ſtraight hair, who was dreſſed like a ſubſtantial farmer. Orlando, having thanked Mr. Walterſon for all his civilities, and received gratefully his advice for the conduct of the buſineſs, mounted his horſe and proceeded

towards

towards Salifbury, meditating fometimes on the hopes he had of obtaining reftitution of the Rayland eftate; but oftener on Monimia, for whofe fake more than his own he wifhed to poffefs it.

His journey, almoft acrofs the whole country of Wilts, was long, and rendered particularly tedious by the viciffitudes of froft and thaw that had prevailed for fome days—which had made the roads, where the fnow half diffolved had been again fuddenly frozen, fo dangerous, that he was often under the neceffity of leading his horfe for many miles together. He propofed, after vifiting Mrs. Fleming, to crofs the country to Rayland Hall; and, whatever pain it might coft him to revifit thofe fcenes of his former happinefs, to difcover, if poffible, the perfon whom Walterfon defcribed as having with him witneffed Mrs. Rayland's will.—He fuddenly recollected that, in his way, he fhould be within a few miles of the refidence of Mrs. Lennard—for fo he called her, forgetting at that moment her change of name; and that it

could at leaſt do no harm if he ſaw her, and endeavour to find in her converſation, if not from her candour, ſomething which might lend him a clue for the diſcovery of Monimia.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

AT Salifbury Orlando determined to make fome flight alteration in his plan, and inftead of going from thence to Chriftchurch, to go firft into the more eaftern part of Hampfhire, to the refidence of Mrs. Roker; for though this would make his journey confiderably longer, yet, having now feized the idea that by this vifit fome intelligence might be obtained of Monimia, every other confideration yielded to that hope.—Somewhat cheered by it, remote and uncertain as it was, he traverfed the dreary flat of Salifbury plain, and by the evening arrived at Winchefter, where he vainly enquired for that relation of Mrs. Newill (the perfon with whom Monimia was placed) who had given his fifter Selina all the intelligence fhe had

ever received of her. Nobody knew, or wiſhed to aid his ſearch after an obſcure woman who had probably been only a lodger in the place; and with an heart ſinking under the diſappointments he had already experienced, and thoſe he yet feared, he proceeded to Alresford, near which town was ſituated the eſtate which Mrs. Rayland had given her old companion, and which ſhe had ſo worthily beſtowed on Mr. Roker the younger.

It was about one o'clock when Orlando found the place; a red brick houſe with a court before it, and a garden walled behind, on the banks of the Itching. This had been a farm-houſe, but had been ſmartened and new caſed by Mr. Roker, who, aſſuming all the dignity of a man of landed property, was no longer the aſſiſtant ſteward, or the humbly aſſiduous attorney, but a juſtice of the peace, and an eſquire—a title which he held the more tenaciouſly, as he ſuſpected that it was believed by other eſquires that he had no right to it. He was not indeed very eminent either for

morals or *manners*; but he was a man of property, and a thriving man in the world, and his neighbours were not therefore disposed to trouble themselves either with one or the other. As he still practised the law, he was usually in London in the winter; and of late it was observed, that his ancient spouse was always by indisposition prevented from accompanying him when he accepted the invitations to dinner, which were frequently given to them both by the neighbouring families; and some stories were in circulation not much to the honour of his conjugal affection: but whatever were his domestic faults, he was every where received and considered as a respectable man, because he had every appearance of becoming a rich one.

When Orlando arrived at the outward gate, he left his horse, and proceeded up a gravel walk that led to the door of the house, at which he tapped; a maid servant looked out at the parlour window, of which the shutters were before shut, and said, "Master be'nt at home."

"It is not your master," said Orlando, "that

"that I want, but your miſtreſs."—"Miſ-treſs be'nt well," anſwered the girl, "and you cannot a ſee her."

"Is ſhe confined to her bed then?" enquired Orlando.

"Aye," cried the girl, "confined enough for matter of that."

"I ſhould be very much obliged to you," ſaid Orlando, "if you could procure me only a few minutes converſation with her. I have ſome very particular buſineſs with her—it really is very material to me, and I will not be ungrateful if you will oblige me ſo far." He then took out half a guinea, and ſaid, "Perhaps this may be ſome ſmall acknowledgment for your taking the trouble to oblige me."

"Half a guinea!" cried the girl—"Ecollys I haven't a no objection to that, ſure enough; for 'tis a ſight as we don't often ſee at our houſe; but, Lord, I wiſh I dared! but, no, I mawn't."

"Why not?" ſaid Orlando eagerly—"Pray, my dear, do, and I'll make this half guinea a whole one!"

"Will you by George!" anſwered the peaſant girl, who was quite a ruſtic from the fields—"what! gi me a whole entire guinea?"

"Yes," ſaid Orlando—"Here, this very guinea."

"A bran new one, as I hope to live!" exclaimed the girl; "but I'll tell you, maſter, if I does, and I ſhould be found out, I ſhall loſe my place."

"I'll get you a better place," cried Orlando.

"He! he!" ſaid the girl with an ideot laugh—"what would mother ſay?"

"Tell me, pray," cried Orlando, "why you would loſe your place for letting me ſee your miſtreſs?"

"Why, Lord! don't you know? Miſtreſs is gived out to be mad, thof ſhe's no mad *nor* I be—and ſo when maſter e'ent at home, ye ſee, his ſiſter keeps watch like over her, and never lets nobody ſee her; and when we be hired, we be told never to let no ſtrangers in to ſee miſtreſs upon no account whatever; for maſter and his ſiſter, and his naſty old uncle as comes here ſome-

times,

times, they will all have it that miſtreſs ſhe's out of her mind, and that ſtrangers makes her worſe; and ſo ſhe's locked up ſtairs, and have a been ever ſo long; though, poor old ſoul! ſhe's tame enough for aught I ever ſee, and I'm ſure repents her many a time as ſhe have got into their clutches—But, hark! oh Gemini! our Tyger barks! I warrant you Miſs Sukey is coming home."

"Who is ſhe? pray haſten to tell me, and take your money."—"Oh, the Lord!" anſwered the girl, "Miſs Sukey is our maſter's ſiſter, a naſty croſs old maid—She've been to Alresford this morning, or elſe, mun, I ſhouldn't have talked here ſo long—and now if ſhe catches me——"

Orlando, into whoſe mind a thouſand confuſed ideas now ruſhed, of the cauſe of Mrs. Roker's confinement, now dreaded left the only opportunity he ſhould have of hearing of or ſeeing Mrs. Lennard ſhould eſcape him—"Can you not give your miſtreſs a letter," ſaid he, "if you think ſhe is in her ſenſes, and bring me an anſwer this evening?"—"I'll try," anſwered the girl;

"but you'll give me the guinea then—and where ſhall I get the letter, and how will you get the anſwer?—Lord, Sir! it muſt be at night, after Miſs Sukey is a-bed; and I muſt get out of our pantry-window, as I gets off the hooks every now and tan—for the bar on't is looſe, ſo I takes it out." "That will do," ſaid Orlando; "I'll go write my letter;—where will you come for it?"

"Down to the hovel," anſwered the girl, "there, cloſe along the gert barn—I'll ſlip down there when I goes a milking; and then if Madam will gi an anſwer, why you muſt ſtay there till ater our folks be all a-bed; but God a bleſs you go now! for I ſees Miſs Sukey coming along."

"Take your money," ſaid Orlando, giving her the guinea that had ſo tempted her, "and be punctual to the place—You mean that red-roof'd barn on the edge of the turnip field?"

"Yes, yes," anſwered the girl—"Go, pray, now! and as you'll run bump up againſt our Miſs Sukey, tell her as how you

you wanted maſter, and I wouldn't let you in."

Orlando, not without ſomewhat admiring the talent for intrigue, of which even this rude peaſant girl had ſo conſiderable a ſhare, walked back along the gravel walk; and at the wicket gate, which opened at the end of it to the road, he was accoſted by a ſhort, thick, red-faced woman, dreſſed in a yellow-green riding habit, faced with orange-colour, and trimmed with ſilver, and a hat with green and black feathers in it. Her whole face was the colour of bad veal; the ſhade towards her noſe rather more inveterate, and two goggle grey eyes, ſurmounted by two buſhy carrotty eye-brows, gave to her whole countenance ſo terrific an air, that Orlando abſolutely ſtarted back when his eyes firſt diſtinguiſhed it; while this amiable figure, ſtepping in the gate-way, and putting one hand on her hip, while the other held a cane, ſaid in a loud and maſculine voice to Orlando—"Who are you friend? and what is your buſineſs here?"

Orlando anſwered as he had been directed, that he wiſhed to ſpeak to Mr. Roker; but found he was not at home.

"You may leave your buſineſs with me," ſaid Miſs Sukey. Orlando anſwered, "No; that there was no haſte, and he would call again." He then paſſed by this perſon, who gave him an idea of a fury modernized; and obſerved that ſhe ſurveyed him with ſcrutinizing looks, and watched him till he was out of ſight.

He haſtened back to the inn he had left, and ſat down to compoſe his letter to Mrs. Roker, in which he found much more difficulty than he had at firſt been aware of.

If ſhe was confined by her huſband under pretence of madneſs, as he thought was very probably the caſe, in order to prevent her teſtimony being received, or her diſcovering what it was ſuppoſed Roker had inſiſted on her continuing to conceal, ſhe would probably ſtill be deterred, by her fears and her ſhame, from declaring the truth; and if ſhe was indeed mad, his letter to her would avail nothing, or perhaps be

prejudicial,

prejudicial, by falling into the hands of her keepers. There was alſo a third poſſibility, which was, that ſhe might ſtill retain ſo much affection for her young huſband, as to reſent the interference of any one who ſuppoſed her ill uſed, even though they offered her the means of eſcaping from her tyrant. However, as no other chance ſeemed to offer, he determined to hazard this meaſure; and wording his letter as cautiouſly as he could, ſo as not to offend her, he offered, if ſhe was in any degree unpleaſantly ſituated, to ſend her the means of eſcaping, and entreated her to tell him where Monimia was, and all ſhe knew of Mrs. Rayland's affairs at the time of her death; aſſuring her, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that if ever he recovered the eſtate, and by her means, he would not only enter into any agreement ſhe ſhould dictate to ſecure to her all ſhe now poſſeſſed, but would, if ſhe had given all up to her huſband, ſettle upon her for life a ſum that ſhould make her more rich and independent than ſhe had been before ſhe gave her-

ſelf to Mr. Roker; and that ſhe ſhould inhabit her own apartments at the Hall, or any houſe on the eſtate which ſhe might choose. He ended with ſome profeſſions of perſonal regard to her, as well on account of their long acquaintance, as becauſe ſhe was the relation, and had been the benefactreſs of his beloved Monimia.

This letter being finiſhed, he again ſet out on foot; and as it was nearly duſk, concealed himſelf in the hovel which the ſervant girl had directed him to, where he had not waited many minutes before his emiſſary arrived, breathleſs with her fears of being diſcovered. He gave her the letter; with which ſhe hurried away, charging him to ſtay there till ſhe returned to him, though it ſhould be twelve o'clock at night. He promiſed her a farther reward if ſhe ſucceeded in procuring him an anſwer; and then, as the hovel was not in very good repair, and the cold extremely ſevere, he opened a door in it, made for the purpoſe of throwing ſtraw out of the adjoining barn, and took ſhelter in the barn itſelf—

repeating

repeating thoſe lines of Shakeſpeare where Cordelia deſcribes her father; and, in recollecting all that had of late befallen him, all that he had loſt, and the cruel uncertainty of his future deſtiny, as he applied to himſelf thoſe deſcriptive lines,

To "hovel him with ſwine and rogues forlorn,
"In ſhort and muſty ſtraw,"

he remembered the preceding exclamation,

"Alas! alas!
"'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
"Had not concluded all."

Thus, in meditations more moral than amuſing, Orlando paſſed two or three tedious hours, ſheltered by peaſe-halm and ſtraw, which he gathered around him, and leaning againſt the boards of the barn, that he might not fail to hear when the ambaſſadreſs entered the out-houſe adjoining to it. About ten o'clock, as he gueſſed by the time he had been there, he heard a ruſtling among the wood and refuſe of the hovel; and eagerly liſtening, in expectation of being called by his female Mercury, he heard a deep ſigh, or rather groan, and a voice,

very unlike a female voice, lamenting in very bitter and somewhat coarse terms the cruelty of fate: the person soon after made his way through the same door by which Orlando had found entrance, and going farther into the barn, he heard this unwelcome guest make a noise which he knew was striking a light, and, putting a candle into a lantern, which he seemed to have hid, he set it down by him, and began to eat his miserable supper, consisting of scraps and dry crusts.—Orlando, peeping over his fortification, contemplated for a moment this forlorn outcast, whose head, shaded by a few white locks, was on the crown and temples quite bald, and otherwise resembled him who is described as the occasional visitor of the simple village priest:

"The long remember'd beggar was his guest,
"Whose beard descending, swept his aged breast."

He resembled too the "Broken Soldier" of the same admirable poem*; for he had lost one leg, and wore the remnant of a coat

* Goldsmith's Deserted Village.

coat that had once been ſcarlet. As the faint and dull light of a ſmall candle through a thick horn lantern fell upon the furrowed countenance of this unhappy wanderer, Orlando contemplated it with pity, which for an inſtant detached him from the recollection of his own miſeries; and he ſaid to himſelf—"How unworthy, how unmanly are my complaints, when I compare my own ſituation with that of this poor old man, who, trembling on the verge of life, ſeems to have none of its common neceſſaries; yet perhaps has been diſabled from acquiring them by having loſt his limb in the ſervice of what is called his country, that is, in fighting the battles of its politicians; and having been deprived of his leg to preſerve the balance of Europe, has not found in the uſual aſylum a place of reſt, to make him ſuch amends as can be made for ſuch a misfortune! All the horrors of which he had been a witneſs in America now returned to his recollection; and the madneſs and folly of mankind, which occaſioned thoſe horrors, ſtruck him more forcibly now

 than

than when his ſpirits were heated by having been a party in them. In a few moments, however, he recollected, that though he wiſhed to give ſome relief to the diſtreſſed veteran before him, it would not be at all convenient that he ſhould hear the purport of his converſation with his emiſſary; but before he had time to conſider how this might be prevented, he heard her enter the hovel; and, without farther conſideration, his eagerneſs to know if ſhe had a letter for him, induced him to ruſh out and meet her.

"Speak ſoftly!" ſaid he, as ſoon as he found it was really his meſſenger—"there is a beggar in the barn who will hear you; have you a letter for me?"

"Lord, yes!" anſwered the girl; "and ſuch a twitter as I be in ſurely!"

"Give me the letter," cried Orlando, trembling with haſte; "and pray ſpeak ſoftly, leſt the old man within ſhould betray us!"

"'Tis only old Thomas," anſwered the girl, "I dare ſay; for he lies every night

all

all winter long in our barns; and I'll warrant you he'll tell no tales—for in the first place he knows how he'd get no more of our broken victuals if he did; and in the next place he's as deaf as a post."

Orlando, whose impatience to read the letter was quite insupportable, then thought he might safely avail himself of the convenience of the old man's lantern to read it by. The girl assured him he might, and they entered the barn together for that purpose; but there was no longer any light, and all was silent. The girl, however, at the earnest entreaties of Orlando, called aloud to her old acquaintance, and assuring him in a very elevated voice that it was only Pat Welling who wanted him to do a message for her at town the next day—a grumbling assent was soon after heard, and at her request he struck a light, relighted his candle, and brought it to the gentleman, who, eagerly tearing open the billet, read these lines:

"Dear Sir,

"I have received yours. I do not know what is become of the girl you enquire for, as ſhe choſe to quit the worthy perſon I put her to, after perverſely and wickedly refuſing a great and high match with Sir John Belgrave, Bart. the which I doubt not but ſhe has reaſon to repent of before now; though I do heartily beſeech the Lord that ſhe may not have taken to wicked courſes, as there is great reaſon to fear; but my conſcience is clear thereon. I aſſure you, if I know where ſhe is to be found, I will let you know, if you pleaſe to leave your direction with Martha Welling the bearer hereof:—at the ſame time, as to myſelf, thanking you for your kind offers, have no need to trouble you at preſent; and know of no ſuch thing as you are pleaſed to name, in regard to my late dear friend, deceaſed, Mrs. Rayland. Muſt beg to have no applications of like nature notwithſtanding, becauſe interference between married people is dangerous, generally making matters worſe; and if any little diſagreements, which

which I wonder that you ſhould have heard, have paſſed, it is no more than I have heard happens between the happieſt couples; and I am ſure Mr. Roker really has an affectionate regard for me, and I am willing to impute all that ſeems to the contrary to his family, who are very diſagreeable people, and ſuch as I confeſs I ſhould be glad to be out of their way, if ſo be as it could be done without offending Mr. Roker, whom I muſt love, honour and obey till death, as in duty bound. Same time ſhould be glad to do you any ſervice not inconſiſtent with that; and, as I ſaid before, would be glad of your direction, who am, dear Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

RACHEL ROKER.

Leſſington Houſe, near Alresford,
Hants, 10th January 1779.

P. S. Mis. R. hopes Mr. S. will be cautious in mentioning having received theſe few lines, as it would be diſagreeable to Mr. R——."

Orlando thought that in this letter he ſaw the ſtruggle of its writer's mind, between ſomething

ſomething which ſhe fancied was love, with ſhame and revenge. She had been too much flattered at firſt by the very unexpected acquiſition of a young huſband, to own now, without reluctance, that he was a ſavage who had robbed her under pretence of marrying her, and who now confined her, that ſhe might not either diſcover his amours, of which he was ſaid to have a great number, or be tempted through reſentment of them, or her natural ill humour, to declare the conduct ſhe had at his perſuaſion adopted; while her aſking for Orlando's direction, and not ſeeming offended at his letter, perſuaded him that ſhe was pleaſed with the opportunity it gave her, to gratify the revenge which was always in her power, while ſhe knew where to apply to one ſo much intereſted in the diſcovery ſhe could make.

Orlando now determined, ſince the ſervant aſſured him there was no chance of his being admitted to ſee her, to write to her again, and await her anſwer at the inn the next day. He thought there was an

opening

opening for ſuggeſting to her much that he had before omitted, and he had at all events aſſured himſelf by the letter he was now in poſſeſſion of, that ſhe was not mad; a plea which he perfectly underſtood her huſband meant to ſet up againſt the evidence ſhe might otherwiſe be brought to give.

It was not difficult to engage the old beggar to become his meſſenger on this occaſion, nor to prevail on Patty to give him the next letter ſhe ſhould get from her miſtreſs, on condition however that her profits ſhould not be leſſened. He gave her another preſent; comforted the beggar with an earneſt of his future generoſity; and bidding him come by day-break the next morning for the billet he intended to ſend to Mrs. Roker, he took leave for that time of his two newly acquired acquaintance, whom he left much better content with the events of the day than he was—ſince, whatever reaſon he had to believe that he might recover his property, he felt with increaſe of anguiſh that he had no nearer proſpect of recovering Monimia.

Determined

Determined however to loſe no opportunity of continuing his correſpondence, he ſat down the moment he came to the inn, and compoſed a very long letter, in which he enlarged on the ill treatment of her huſband, whoſe gallantries he touched upon, affirming they were the more unpardonable when compared with her merit, and the obligations ſhe had conferred upon him; he hinted at the conſequence of her being compelled to appear, to anſwer upon oath to what ſhe knew, and entreated her to ſave him the pain of calling into court as a party in ſecreting a will, a perſon for whom he had ſo much regard and reſpect; and he concluded with renewed offers of kindneſs in caſe of her coming voluntarily forward to do him juſtice.

His wandering meſſenger was the next morning punctual to his appointment; Orlando ſent him away with his letter; and notwithſtanding his age and his having but one leg, he returned again in about two hours—but, to the infinite mortification of Orlando, with a verbal meſſage, which, though

though it had paſſed through the memory of Mrs. Patty, was very clearly delivered, and was to this effect—" That Madam had got the gentleman's letter; and being prevented from writing at this preſent time, begged him of all love to leave the country for fear of accidents, and he might depend upon hearing of her ſhortly." Not ſatisfied with this, Orlando now paid his bill at the inn, and went down to the barn, where he ſent his vagabond ambaſſador to ſeek for the maid to whom he owed the little progreſs he had made. With ſome difficulty he found her, and prevailed upon her to reviſit the place of rendezvous, where ſhe informed Orlando that Miſs Sukey had been watching about old miſtreſs more than ordinary, and that the poor woman was frightened out of her wits leſt Orlando's having written to her ſhould be known; wherefore, as Miſs Sukey ſeemed to ſuſpect ſomething, old Madam did entreat the 'ſquire not to ſtay thereabouts; becauſe ſhe ſhould in that caſe be more ſtrictly confined, and never ſhould be able to write to him,

him, which ſhe now promiſed to do, if he would only leave the country. As this was all the intelligence the diſappointed Orlando could now procure, he was compelled to obey this unwelcome injunction, left he ſhould loſe all future advantage; and engaging by renewed preſents the fidelity and future aſſiſtance of his two emiſſaries, he remounted his horſe, and took the road to Wincheſter. He now fell again into melancholy reflections: every hour added to his deſpair about Monimia, and without her, life was not in his opinion worth having. From theſe thoughts a natural tranſition led him to conſider the wonderful tenacity with which thoſe beings clung to life, whoſe exiſtence ſeemed to him only a ſeries of the moſt terrible ſufferings:—beings, who expoſed to all the miſeries of pain, poverty, ſickneſs and famine; to pain unrelieved, and the feebleneſs of age unaſſiſted, yet ſtill were anxious to live; and could never, as he at this moment found himſelf diſpoſed to do—

> "Reaſon thus with life:
> "If I do loſe thee, I do loſe a thing
> "Which none but fools would keep."

Yet

Yet he had ſeen many die in the field, who neither ſeemed to fear nor feel the ſtroke of that deſtiny which miſerable age ſtill recoiled and crept away from. The poor maimed wanderer, whoſe daily wants he had for a little while ſuſpended, was an inſtance that the fear of death makes the moſt wretched life ſupportable. In purſuing this train of thought he arrived at Wincheſter, where he intended to remain till the next day.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

EARLY on the following morning Orlando left Winchefter; but it was between three and four o'clock before he arrived at that part of the New Foreft which is near Chriftchurch, and the froft, now fet in with great feverity, had made the roads very difficult for an horfe, efpecially the way which he was directed to purfue, through the foreft to the refidence of Mrs. Fleming.—It was a deep, hollow road, only wide enough for waggons, and was in fome places fhaded by hazle and other brufhwood; in others, by old beech and oaks, whofe roots wreathed about the bank, intermingled with ivy, holly, and evergreen fern, almoft the only plants that appeared in a ftate of vegetation, unlefs the pale and fallow mifletoe, which here and there par-

tially

tially tinted with faint green the old trees above them.

Orlando, as slowly he picked his way over the rugged road, whose poached surface, now hardened by the frost, hardly allowed a footing to his horse, recollected the hunting parties in the snow, which had amused him in America; but the scene on each side of him was very different. The scanty appearance of foliage was quite unlike an American forest, where, in only a few hours after the severest weather, which had buried the whole country in snow, burst into bloom, and presented, beneath the tulip tree and the magnolia, a more brilliant variety of flowers than art can collect in the most cultivated European garden. Orlando, however, loved England, and had early imbibed that fortunate prejudice, that it is in England only an Englishman can be happy; yet he now thought, that were he once sure Monimia was lost to him (and his fears of finding it so became every hour more alarming), he should be more wretched in his own country than in any

 other,

other, ſince every object would remind him of their cruel ſeparation. In this diſpoſition, trying to accuſtom himſelf to reflect on a circumſtance which now diſtracted him, he made a ſort of determination, that if all his endeavours to find Monimia were baffled, as they had hitherto been, he would remain only to ſee the termination of the ſuit relative to the Rayland eſtate, in hopes of leaving his mother, brother, and ſiſters, in a more fortunate ſituation; and reſerving for himſelf only as much as would ſupport him in the itinerant life he ſhould embrace, to wander alone over Europe and America. While he purſued theſe contemplations, the way became almoſt impaſſable; for a ſmall current of water filtering through the rocky bank, had ſpread itſelf over the road, and formed a ſheet of ice, on which his horſe was every moment in danger of falling, though the precaution had been taken to turn the ſhoes.—He had before diſmounted, and now contrived to get his horſe up the leaſt ſteep part of the hollow, and then, ſtill leading it by the bridle, he followed

followed the foot-path which led along its edge.

The tufts of trees and thick underwood now became more frequent; and though it was a fine, clear evening, the winter ſun, almoſt ſunk beneath the horizon, lent only pale and cold rays among the intervening wood.—Orlando ſuppoſing, that if he were benighted, he ſhould no longer diſtinguiſh the path, quickened his pace; and the path he followed, diverging a little from the horſe road, brought him to a place where the inequalities of the ground, half ſhaded with bruſh-wood, ſhewed that beneath it were concealed more conſiderable fragments of ruins, than what appeared above among the trees, from whence the maſſes of ſtone were ſo mantled with ivy, they could hardly be diſtinguiſhed. The path which Orlando continued to purſue, wound among them, and led under broken arches and buttreſſes, which had reſiſted the attacks of time and of violence, towards an old gateway, whoſe form was yet entire.

Every thing was perfectly ſtill around

even the robin, ſolitary ſongſter of the frozen woods, had ceaſed his faint veſpers to the ſetting ſun, and hardly a breath of air agitated the leafleſs branches. This dead ſilence was interrupted by no ſound, but the ſlow progreſs of his horſe, as the hollow ground beneath his feet ſounded as if he trod on vaults. There was in the ſcene, and in this dull pauſe of nature, a ſolemnity not unpleaſing to Orlando, in his preſent diſpoſition of mind.—Certain that the path he was purſuing muſt lead to ſome village or farm houſe, and little apprehenſive of the inconvenience that could in this country befall a man accuſtomed to traverſe the deſerts of America, he ſtopped a moment or two indulging a mournful reverie, before he began to remove, in order to make a paſſage for his horſe, a kind of bar, or rather broken gate, which, with thorns, and a faggot or two piled under it, paſſed from one ſide to the other of the broken arch, and made here, with an hedge that was carried among the ruins, a diviſion

of

of the foreft, or perhaps one of its boundaries.

As he meditated here, he heard, not far from him, human voices, which feemed to be thofe of children; and, leaning over the bar, to fee if he could difcern the perfons who fpoke, he obferved a female figure feated on a mafs of fallen ftone, and apparently waiting for two girls, one about nine, the other feven years old, who were prattling together, as they peeped about in fearch of fomething among the fern-ftacks and low tufts of broom that were near. The woman, whofe face was turned towards them, feemed loft in thought—Her ftraw bonnet was tied down clofe to her face, and fhe was wrapped in a long black cloak; a little bafket ftood by her, and her appearance, as well as that of the children, was fuch as feemed to denote, that though they were not of the peafantry of the country, they were as little to be ranked among its moft affluent inhabitants.

Orlando, apprehending that the approach of a ftranger, in fuch a place, and at fuch

a time, might alarm ſo defenceleſs a party, proceeded with as little noiſe as poſſible to unfaſten the bar; but, on his approach, the young woman aroſe, and in apparent hurry ſaid, "Come, my loves! you forget how late it is, and that your mama will expect us."

The voice riveted Orlando to the ſpot for a moment; he then involuntarily ſtepped forward, and ſaw——Monimia!

He repeated her name wildly, as if he doubted whether he poſſeſſed his ſenſes; and as he claſped her to his boſom, and found it was indeed his own Monimia, ſhe was unable, from exceſs of pleaſure and ſurpriſe, to anſwer the incoherent queſtions he aſked her. Half frantic with joy as he was, he ſoon perceived that the ſuddenneſs of this meeting had almoſt overwhelmed her. Silent, breathleſs, and trembling, ſhe leaned on his arm, without having the power to tell him, what he at length underſtood from the two little girls, who had been at firſt frightened, and then amazed at the ſcene—That Monimia, or, as they called her, Miſs

Moryſine,

Moryſine, was now, and had been for ſome time, under the protection of that very Mrs. Fleming, the widow of his gallant friend, whom he was now going to viſit. Neither of them knew how they arrived at her humble retirement, a cottage among the woods, fitted up and enlarged with two additional rooms by a ſea officer, the diſtant relation of Fleming, who was now in America, and who had lent this pleaſant, ſolitary houſe as a ſhelter to his widow and her children. —Nor was it for ſome time poſſible for Orlando properly to explain to Mrs. Fleming who he was, or how different thoſe motives were, which induced him now to ſee her, from any hope of finding, in the pious office of viſiting the family of his deceaſed friend, the ſole happineſs of his life.

When at length, amid this disjointed and broken converſation, Mrs. Fleming was brought not only to recollect the young man, who, on her huſband's embarkation for America, had taken ſo much pains to be uſeful to him, in the trying moment of ſeparation from his family, by

to acknowledge him who had actually received his last breath, and now brought her his dying blessing; her own afflictions, to a lively sense of which Orlando's account of Fleming's death had awakened her, prevented her, for some time, from attending to the unexpected happiness of her young friends. Unable to hear, with composure, the account which Orlando held himself bound to give, yet solicitously asking questions, the answers to which made her heart bleed afresh, Mrs. Fleming at length requested leave to retire; and taking her children with her, Monimia was left at liberty to give to the impatient Orlando the account he so eagerly desired to hear, of what had happened to her since the date of the only letter he had ever received from her, which was written not more than six weeks after his departure.—She doubted of her own strength to give, and of his patience to hear this recital: but he appeared so very solicitous, that she determined to attempt it; and while his eyes were ardently fixed on her face, and

watched

watched every turn of her expreſſive features, which, though ſhe was pale and thin, Orlando thought more lovely than ever, ſhe thus in a ſoft and low voice began:

"As well as I can recollect, Orlando, I related to you, in my long letter, the troubleſome and impertinent intruſion of Sir John Belgrave; and Selina has told you ſince, that, as he carried his perſecutions ſo far as to come into the houſe, and endeavour to force his way into my room, I was under the neceſſity of telling my aunt how he found admittance, and of betraying a ſecret I had ſo many reaſons to wiſh might never have been diſcovered.—Alas! Orlando, how much did I not ſuffer from the bitterneſs of her reproaches! ſufferings which were ſharpened by my being compelled to acknowledge, that I had in ſome meaſure deſerved them, by having carried on a correſpondence contrary to what I knew was my duty.—Indeed the puniſhment I now underwent, from day to day, ſeemed ſometimes much heavier than the crime deſerved; eſpecially when my

aunt, to whom my moving was inconvenient (though certainly, in that great houſe, there was room enough for me without interfering with her), began to make the diſcovery, I had thus been compelled to make, an everlaſting theme of reproach to me; to ſay, that ſuch a cunning, intriguing creature was not fit to be in any houſe; and to threaten me continually to ruin you, Orlando, with Mrs. Rayland, by blowing us up, as ſhe was pleaſed to term it. All this I bore, however hard it was to bear, with ſilence, and, I hope, with patience, flattering myſelf, my dear friend! that the anger we had perhaps mutually deſerved would thus be exhauſted on me, and that I alone ſhould be the victim, if a victim were required: yet, when my cruel aunt, unmoved by my reſignation and ſubmiſſion, ſeemed ſo deſirous of getting rid of me, that I believe ſhe would have been glad to have ſold me to Sir John Belgrave; and when ſhe inſiſted upon my conſenting to marry him, though I do not believe he ever intended it, and only made that a pretence

for getting me into his power; I own there were moments, when, in abſolute deſpair, I thought it would hardly have been criminal to have put an end to a life ſo very inſupportable; nor could I, I think, have lived, if ſome of thoſe books you taught me to read, and to underſtand, had not inſtructed me, that it was impious to mumur, or reſiſt the diſpenſations of Providence, who knew beſt what we were able to bear.—Perhaps too, the hope, the dear hope of living in your affection, and of being beloved by you, however hard my lot, lent me a portion of fortitude, for which, ſurely, nobody ever had more occaſion: for in proportion, Orlando, as Mrs Lennard became attached to that odious Roker, the little affection ſhe had ever ſhewn me declined, and was changed into diſlike and hatred.—She was ſometimes ſo much off her guard, as to ſuffer her exceſſive and ridiculous attachment to him to diminiſh her attention to her miſtreſs, and on theſe occaſions, I uſed to ſupply her place;—yet then, if Mrs. Rayland ſeemed pleaſed

with my attendance, ſhe would quarrel with me for attending, and ſay, that ſhe ſuppoſed the next thing ſuch an artful ſlut would think of, would be to ſupplant her with her lady; and then again ſhe would threaten to blow you up.—Indeed, I believe, that no ſituation could be leſs enviable than that of my poor aunt was at this time; for though certainly, at her age, one would have thought ſhe might have been exempt from ſuffering much pain from love, ſhe did really appear ſo tormented by her exceſſive paſſion for Roker, and her fears of loſing him, that ſhe was an object of pity.—If I was below with her lady, while ſhe was with him, then ſhe was afraid of my getting into favour with Mrs. Rayland; and if I was above, and he was in the houſe, ſhe was in terror leſt ſo intriguing a creature ſhould carry off her lover. When I ſo firmly reſiſted all the inſidious offers of Sir John Belgrave, ſhe doubted whether this delectable Mr. Roker was not the cauſe of it; and even when he happened to come into the room where I was,

though

though ſhe was preſent, ſhe turned pale with jealouſy, and, I ſuppoſe, tormented the man, who, though one of the moſt horrid-tempered monſters exiſting, commanded himſelf ſo much, that he bore it all with an apparent increaſe of affection; and pretending, in his turn, to be jealous, ſaid, that he could not bear to divide her affections even with me.

"I ſaw that they were determined to get rid of me, but could not immediately ſettle how; for though Roker, from time to time, ſtarted ſome plan for that purpoſe, the lady, always ſuſpecting that he liked me, was fearful leſt he ſhould only divide me from her, to ſecure me to himſelf."

"Execrable villain!" cried Orlando, ſtarting up—"he dared not think of it."

"Be patient, Orlando, or I ſhall never have courage to go on.—I know not what was in his imagination, though certainly he took every opportunity of making very improper ſpeeches to me; but deteſtable as I believe his morals are, his avarice is greater than any other of his odious paſ-

ſions;

ſions; and this he found he might gratify, when the ſucceſs of any other was uncertain; and therefore he affected to be as anxious as my aunt was, to remove me from Rayland Hall.

"Ah, my dear friend, what an autumn was that I paſſed there! yet my fate, dreary as it appeared to me, was not then at the worſt; I had ſtill ſome ſweeteners of my melancholy exiſtence; for I ſometimes met Selina, and wept with her; and ſometimes, when I was convinced Sir John Belgrave no longer lingered about the park (where for many weeks I could never go without being inſulted by him), I uſed to get out alone; and ſtealing away to ſome of thoſe places we uſed to viſit together, I would lean my head againſt a tree, or hide my face with my hands, and liſtening, with cloſed eyes, to the ſounds that were then familiar to us, uſed to fancy I heard your footſteps among the leaves, or your voice whiſpering in the air that ſighed among the trees. Once, at the old ſeat on the Hurſt hill, I ſaw your name, ſo

lately

lately cut as the very day before you went away; and could I have wept on the letters, I believe the tears I afterwards ſhed there would have worn them out.—I took a fancy to the place, which nobody elſe ever thought of frequenting; and often, as autumn came on, and the days grew ſhort, I ſtaid till I was frightened at being out ſo late, and have run home terrified at every noiſe.—If a pheaſant flew up, or an hare darted acroſs the path, they threw me into ſuch terrors, that I could hardly reach the houſe. On theſe occaſions, all was well if my aunt's Adonis was with her; but if it happened that he was out when I was, ſhe took it into her head that we were together, or that we might meet, and then ſhe was, I really believe, out of her ſenſes. Very unluckily for me, I came in one evening later than uſual, breatheleſs with my fooliſh fears, and found my poor aunt in terrible agitation, becauſe Mr. Roker had promiſed her to be in at tea-time, and he was not yet arrived.—She queſtioned me ſharply where I had been; and I ſaid in the mill

wood

wood, which was the truth; for I had that evening met Selina. She aſked me, with ſtill more aſperity, if I had not met ſomebody? The conſciouſneſs that I had, made me bluſh, I believe, very deeply, and I faltered as I ſaid No!—In a moment Roker came in, half drunk, and the poor old lady flew at him like a turkey-cock, and aſked him, which way he came? As he was leſs upon his good-behaviour than uſual, he ſaid, "Came! why I came by the mill; which way ſhould I come from the place where I have been?"—This confirmed, ſhe thruſt me out of the room, and ordering me to go up ſtairs to bed that moment, ſhe threw herſelf into a fit, as Rebecca told me afterwards. I do not know how Mr. Roker contrived to appeaſe her—ſhe was reconciled to him the next day; but I was the victim, and was, after that time, forbidden to go out without her leave. This, hard as it was, I could ſtill have borne, becauſe it was juſt at that time Mrs. Rayland ſeemed to grow particulary kind to me; and to have even a

degree

degree of pleaſure in talking to me of you. It was now time to expect to hear from you, and I obſerved her anxiety every day increaſe.—She often ſighed when ſhe ſpoke of you; and once ſaid, that her houſe ſeemed to have loſt all its cheerfulneſs ſince you had left it;—and often ſhe would look at an old enameled picture of Sir Orlando, her grandfather, and, comparing his features with yours, admire the likeneſs —then, again, regret your abſence, and ſink into low ſpirits. Indeed her health ſeemed every day to decline: and I ſometimes thought ſhe was diſcontented with Mrs. Lennard, though from long habit ſhe was more entirely governed by her than ever. Pattenſon's having dealt ſo largely in ſmuggled goods, and having even made her houſe a receptacle for them, was diſcovered by his not being able or willing to bribe a new officer who ſucceeded ſome of his old friends, and who, upon that Jonas Wilkins's turning informer, came one night to the Hall, and made a ſeizure of about two hundred pounds worth of ſpirits.

ſpirits, tea, and lace; a thing that offended Mrs. Rayland extremely, as ſhe thought it derogatory to her dignity, and a profanation of her cellars, which, as we know (and Monimia faintly ſmiled,) are immediately adjoining to the family vault of the Raylands. This, and other things, particularly ſome of his amours, which now came to her knowledge, had occaſioned her to diſmiſs Pattenſon, and to think higher of you for the pains Pattenſon had taken to prejudice her againſt you: but the diſmiſſion, and ſoon afterwards the death of Pattenſon, and the diſgrace of the old coachman, who was a party concerned in this contraband buſineſs (and who had beſides diſpleaſed Mrs. Rayland by ſetting up a whiſky, and dreſſing his daughters in the moſt expenſive faſhion), threw the old lady more than ever into the power of my aunt; though, how ſhe eſcaped being included in the charge, I never could imagine: I know ſhe was acquainted with, and I believe ſhe was concerned in the clandeſtine trade which had for ſo many years been

been carried on at Rayland Hall; but probably Pattenſon dared not impeach her, leſt, though he might ruin her, he ſhould at the ſame time provoke her to diſcover ſome things in his life which would have effectually cut him off from that portion of favour he ſtill poſſeſſed with Mrs. Rayland; who, angry as ſhe was with him, ſtocked the farm he retired to, furniſhed his houſe, and continued to him almoſt every advantage he enjoyed at the Hall, except the opportunity of making it a receptacle for ſmuggled goods.

"However that was, my aunt certainly continued to have great influence over Mrs. Rayland, though I often thought it was more through habit than love; and I am perſuaded that, if ſhe had not always guarded againſt the inclination which Mrs. Rayland at times betrayed to take your mother and ſiſters into favour, they would by degrees have acquired that aſcendancy over her from their own merit, which Mrs. Lennard had now only from habit—But my aunt was too cunning to give them an

opportunity;

opportunity; and that, I believe, was partly the reaſon why ſhe was ſo afraid of my being taken into Mrs. Rayland's kindneſs, ſince nothing was more natural than for me to ſpeak in their favour. She need not, however, have dreaded this; for, however willing or anxious I might be, my awe of Mrs. Rayland was too great for me to aſpire to the character of her confident: and ſhe looked upon me as a mere child.—Probably our ages differed too much to allow any great ſympathy between us—and I could give her no other pleaſure than by attending to the ſtories ſhe uſed to love to repeat, of the days of her youth.—But Mrs. Lennard, though by no means deſirous of being herſelf the auditor, and never eaſy but when ſhe could remain unmoleſted with her dear Mr. Roker, was ſtill jealous leſt her lady ſhould feel any degree of kindneſs for me; and, I believe, by imputing to me faults which Mrs. Rayland took her word for, contrived gradually to get her conſent to my going apprentice, under the idea of my being enabled to get

my

my own bread honeſtly in buſineſs; while ſhe obviated the inconvenience of my departure by introducing a new ſervant to be about her lady, who was entirely devoted to her own intereſt—and kept away the old cook as much as ſhe could, whom Mrs. Rayland never would part with, but whom my aunt feared and diſliked, becauſe ſhe was an honeſt blunt creature, who never feared ſpeaking her mind, and was particularly a friend of yours, as you may I am ſure recollect. Latterly ſhe became more than uſually diſagreeable to my aunt and Roker, becauſe ſhe uſed to rejoice in the thought that her dear young captain would one day or other be maſter of the Hall; and when Lennard angrily aſked her how ſhe dared talk of any one's being maſter of the Hall while her lady lived? ſhe replied, that ſhe dared talk ſo, becauſe Madam herſelf had told her ſo."

"And where, my Monimia, is this good old friend of mine now?" ſaid Orlando—"Her evidence may be of great importance to us."—"Alas!" replied ſhe,

"I know

" I know not: I only heard from your ſiſter, that Dr. Hollybourn, who acted as executor to the only will that was produced, immediately diſcharged all the ſervants, giving to each of them a preſent above the two years wages which Mrs. Rayland had in that will given to each of the inferior ones; and, with many good words, got as many as he could of them into other ſervices, at a diſtance from the country—But I recollect that the cook had relations in the neighbourhood of the Hall, of whom, I dare ſay, intelligence about her may be procured.

" Ah, dear Orlando! if the account I have already given you of my unhappy life after your departure has affected you, what will you feel when I relate what paſſed afterwards, to which all my preceding ſufferings were nothing!—It is true that, as I lay liſtening of a night to the howling of the wind in the great melancholy room at the end of the north gallery, where I was locked up every night, I have frequently ſtarted at the viſions my fancy raiſed;

and

and as the dark green damaſk hangings ſwelled with the air behind them, I have been ſo much terrified as to be unable to move or to ſummon to my recollection all the arguments you were wont to uſe againſt ſuperſtitious fear—Then too I have been glad even to hear the rats as they raced round the ſkirting boards, becauſe it convinced me there were ſome living creatures near me, and helped me to account for the ſtrange noiſes I ſometimes heard. As winter came on, my miſery in this great room became worſe and worſe; and ſuch was my terror, that I could hardly ever ſleep—I once contrived to get candles, and ſet up a light in my room; but this only ſerved to ſhew me the great grim picture over the chimney, of one of the Rayland family in armour, with a ſword in his hand: and I was indeed, beſides this, effectually cured of wiſhing for a light on the ſecond night I tried it—for a party of my friendly rats, perceiving the candle, which was to them a delicate treat, took it very compoſedly out of the ſocket, and began

began to eat the end of it which was not alight.—This compelled me to leave my bed to put it out, and them to flight; while the terror I ſuffered was only increaſed by this attempt to mitigate it.—Good God! how weak I was to add imaginary horrors to the real calamities of my ſituation; rather than try to acquire ſtrength of mind to bear the evils from which I could not eſcape!

"It was at this time that Sir John Belgrave, who, on finding his inſulting propoſals treated with the contempt they deſerved, had left the country for ſome time, returned thither; and as Jacob, his confident, could no longer find means to put his letters in my way, or to haraſs and alarm me by coming to the door of the turret, he changed his plan, and pretended that his views were highly honourable. In letter to my aunt he entreated her intereſt with me, and that ſhe would prevail upon me to ſee him: and then it was, Orlando, that my ſufferings were almoſt beyond the power of endurance."

"What!" exclaimed Orlando, "was the infamous woman baſe enough then to betray you to this villain?"

"Have patience, I entreat you, Orlando!—She betrayed me then, ſo far as to inſiſt upon my ſeeing Sir John, and hearing what had to ſay."

"Eternal curſes blaſt them both!" exclaimed Orlando:—"but I terrify you, my angel!"

"You do, indeed," anſwered Monimia; "and I ſhall never, Orlando, conclude my mournful narrative, if you will not be more calm."

"I will," replied he; "at leaſt I will try at it—Pray go on."

"I reſiſted this propoſal of ſeeing Sir John Belgrave for many days; till my aunt, enraged at what ſhe called my ſtupid idiotiſm, declared to me that, if I perſiſted to behave ſo ſenſeleſsly, ſhe would relate to Mrs. Rayland all my clandeſtine meetings with you, and then turn me out of the houſe to take my own courſes.—I would willingly have left the houſe, and,

 rather

rather than have undergone one day longer the misery I hourly experienced, I would have begged my way to you in America (Orlando sighed and shuddered); but when my cruel aunt threatened to take such means as I knew would ruin you, and blast all those hopes on which alone I lived, of seeing you return to happiness and independence, I own I could not bear to hazard it, and at length consented to see this detested suitor—not without some hope that my peremptory refusal repeated (for I had already given it him in writing) might put an end to all his hateful pretensions. A day therefore was fixed: but Sir John, either repenting that he had gone so far, or from some caprice, wrote to my aunt to say he was that day sent for express to London, to attend a dying relation, from whom he expected a great acquisition of fortune. This might be true—I cared not whether it was or no, but blessed the fortunate relief from persecution. In the interim your father, who was taken ill some time before, died.—Oh! how much

did

did I see Selina suffer during his illness—how much did I suffer myself! and all was aggravated to an indescr ib able degre of wretchedness, by our believing that you, Orlando, were lost in your passage to America!—If I thought my former condition insupportable, what was the increase of my sorrows now, when torn from the last consolation I had left, that of weeping sometimes with Selina!—My aunt, almost as soon as Sir John Belgrave had left the country, informed me that she had found a person at Winchester willing to take me for a small premium, and that I was to go the following Thursday.—I never knew how all this was settled; but very, very certain it is, that it was arranged between her, her lover Mr. Roker, and Sir John Belgrave. She was impatient to have me gone; and sent the old cook, to take care of me, as ar as Havant, where Mrs. Newill, to whom I was consigned, met me, and conducted me to a little miserable apartment, which, with a small bow-windowed shop, she inhabited at Winchester, and where she

was to teach me a buſineſs which I ſoon found ſhe did not know herſelf.

"Mrs. Newill was ſaid to have been well brought up; but, if ſhe were, her having long aſſociated with people in very inferior life had conſiderably obliterated the traces of a good education; and the inconvenient circumſtances to which ſhe had been expoſed, in conſequence of having had a brutal and extravagant huſband, ſeemed at once to have ſoured her temper, and relaxed her morals.—She had ſome remains of beauty, and was fonder of talking of its former power than I thought redounded much to her honour.—Her huſband had poſſeſſed a place in the dock-yard at Portſmouth, from whence he had been diſmiſſed for ſome heavy offences, and lived now upon the wide world; while his wife was, by the aſſiſtance of her friends, trying to get into buſineſs to ſupport herſelf; their only ſon, a young man of twenty, was in the navy.——The greateſt perſonal hardſhip I endured on this my change of

abode, was ſleeping in the ſame bed with Mrs. Newill, which I did for the firſt week: —but, fortunately for me, though it was probably much otherwiſe to her, her huſband, believing ſhe had money, for he had heard of her having taken an apprentice, came ſuddenly to her houſe, or rather lodging, and I was diſmiſſed to a little cloſet in a garret with a truckle bed: but it was paradiſe compared with my ſhare of Mrs. Newill's; for now I could weep at liberty, and pray for you!

"The arrival of ſuch a man as Mr. Newill did not much contribute to the proſperity of his wife's buſineſs—Thoſe who, from their former knowledge of her, were willing to promote her welfare, grew cold when they found their bounty ſerved only to ſupport her huſband in drunkenneſs, and her diſtreſs became very great, of which I was a ſharer; but I endeavoured to do all I could to continue her buſineſs, which was now almoſt entirely neglected.

"This went on for ſix weeks, when a regiment came thither to aſſiſt in guarding

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the prisoners at the castle; and Sir John Belgrave suddenly made his appearance, protesting to me, that he knew nothing of my being there, and only came down on a visit to some of his friends in the newly arrived corps.

"I did not believe this, and found every day more cause to suppose that Mrs. Newill's necessities had driven her to the inhuman expedient of betraying me to him. Though I had often ridiculed the stories in novels where young women are forcibly carried away, I saw great reason to believe some such adventure might happen to me, for I was totally unprotected, and I believe, absolutely sold."

Orlando, starting up, traversed the room; nor could, for some time, the soothing voice of Monimia restore him to sufficient composure to attend to her narrative.

At length his anxiety to know what he yet trembled to hear obliged him to reassume his seat, and she thus proceeded:

"Surely, Orlando, you do not suppose that any distress, any misery, could have

induced

induced me to liſten to Sir John Belgrave; though, inſtead of the advantages he affected to offer me, he could have laid empires at my feet.—It is true that I now ſuffered every ſpecies of mortification, and even much perſonal inconvenience; but my heart felt only the horrid tidings I received from Selina. Mrs. Rayland's death, and the total diſappointment of your family's hopes, were very melancholy; but when Perſeus arrived, and your death, Orlando, was confirmed by the teſtimony of a man who had ſeen you fall, my wretchedneſs ſo much exceeded all that I believed it poſſible to bear, that I became ſtupified and inſenſible to every thing elſe, and walked about without hearing or ſeeing the objects around me. I never ſlept, but with the aid of laudanum—I could not ſhed a tear, and my heart ſeemed to be turned to marble. I had nobody to hear my complaints, and therefore I did not complain; and the only circumſtance that rouſed me from this ſtate of mind, was the renewal of Sir John Belgrave's viſits, who, after an abſence of ſe-

ven or eight days, returned with new proposals, and dared to triumph in the knowledge that his rival, as he insolently called you, was no longer in his way.

"It was now, Orlando, that a new method was pursued. He contrived, what was not indeed very difficult, to gain over Mr. Newill to his interest.—I was now treated with great respect—A room was hired for me in the same house, and Mrs. Newill offered me credit for any clothes I chose to have. I, who was hardly conscious of my existence, who mechanically performed the business of the day, and cared not whether I ever again saw the light of the sun, refused her offers, and desired nothing but that I might be protected from the affront of Sir John Belgrave's visits. If I sat at work in the shop, he was there:—if I quitted it, he came into the work-room, under pretence of speaking to Mr. Newill. I found that Newill was a wretch who would have sacrificed a daughter of his own for a few guineas, with which to purchase his favourite indulgences; and Sir John Bel-

grave

grave scrupled not to say, that, since I had refused his honourable offers, he held it no dishonour to compel me, by any means, to exchange my present wretched dependence, for affluence and prosperity—that I could not now have the pretence of constancy to you, and that his excessive love for me would in time induce me to return it.—Such were the terms in which he pressed his suit, giving me at the same time to understand that I was in his power.

"But, liberal as I have reason to believe he was to Mr. Newill, his debts were too numerous and extensive to be so settled; and, in consequence of one of these, to the amount of five hundred pounds, he was arrested in London, and sent for his wife to attend him in the King's Bench.

"This the unhappy woman prepared to do in two or three days; and, in that time, made over the little stock for sale to one of her friends, who had advanced money for her.—But what was to become of me?—As she had no longer a business, she could have no occasion for an apprentice, and I

could be only a burthen to her; but I soon found that it was her hufband's directions that fhe fhould take me with her, and I determined at all events not to go.

"I now again wrote to my cruel aunt, who though fhe almoft immediately after Mrs. Rayland's death fettled within twelve miles of the town whither fhe had fent me, had never taken any other notice of me than to fend me a fmall fupply of clothes and two guineas, together with a verbal meffage, that the reafon fhe had not anfwered any of my former, nor fhould anfwer any of my future letters, was, that fhe would not encourage in her perverfenefs a perfon fo blind to her own intereft, and that, till I knew how to behave to Sir John Belgrave, I fhould find no friend in her. It was in vain I wrote to her, urging every plea that I thought might move her, and foliciting her pity and protection, as the only friend I had in the world. She either hardened her heart againft me, or perhaps never got my letters. The bufinefs that detained Mrs. Newill at Winchefter, could

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not be fettled fo expeditioufly as fhe expected. In the mean time, what a fituation was mine! I had nothing to hope but death, and death only could deliver me from the fear of evils infinitely more infupportable. Orlando, how earneftly did I pray to join you in heaven! how often did I invoke you to hear me! and cafting towards the weft my fwollen eyes (for I was now able to weep in repeating your name), how often have I addreffed the fetting fun, which, as it funk away from our horizon, might illuminate, I thought, that fpot in the wildernefs of America where all my happinefs was buried!"

Orlando kiffed away the tears that now fell on her lovely cheeks, and mingled his own with them; when Monimia after a little time recovered her voice, and went on—"It was to indulge fuch meditations, the only comfort I had, that I ftole out whenever I could be fecure that my perfecutor was with his military friends; and as I dared not go far, the church-yard on that fide of the cathedral where the foldiers did not parade, or fometimes the cathedral

itſelf, were the only places where there was a chance of my not being moleſted; and there, if I could ever procure quiet for a quarter of an hour, the daws that inhabited the old buildings, and who were now making their neſts (for it was early ſpring), recalled to my mind, by the ſimilarity of ſounds, Rayland-Hall; and when I compared my preſent condition with even the moſt comfortleſs hours I paſſed there, I reproached myſelf for my former diſcontent, and envied all who were at peace beneath the monumental ſtones around me.—Later than uſual one evening I returned from this mournful walk, and, making my way with ſome difficulty through the crowds who were aſſembling in the ſtreets to celebrate ſome victory or advantage in America (and at the very name of America my heart ſickened within me), I was overtaken near the door of Mrs. Newill's lodging, by the perſon whom I moſt dreaded to meet—Sir John Belgrave, evidently in a ſtate of intoxication, with three officers in the ſame ſituation, who inſiſted on ſeeing me home. I was within a few yards of the door,

door, and haſtened on to diſengage myſelf from them; but they followed me, or rather Sir John Belgrave with one arm round my waiſt hurried me on, talking to me in a ſtyle of which I was too much terrified to know more than that it was moſt inſulting and improper.

"In this way, however, while I remonſtrated, and trembled, and entreated in vain, I was forced into a little room behind the ſhop, where Mrs. Newill uſually ſat, where, inſtead of her, there ſat by the ſide of a ſmall fire (for the weather was yet cold) a young man in the naval uniform, who ſtarting up on the abrupt entrance of ſuch a party, ſtood amazed a moment at the language of Sir John Belgrave and his friends, and then, fiercely demanding what buſineſs they had in that houſe, ordered them to leave it; and, taking my hand, he ſaid—"I am aſhamed, gentlemen, of your treatment of this young woman—Don't be alarmed, miſs —I will protect you."

"I moſt willingly put myſelf into the protection he offered, when Belgrave, enraged at being thus addreſſed by a perſon whom he

he confidered as fo much his inferior, uttered a great oath, and faid—" And, pray, fellow, who are you?—and what the devil have you to do with this girl?"—" Mafter of my mother's apartment," replied the young failor, who I now underftood was Mrs. Newill's fon—" and an Englifhman! As the firft, I fhall prevent any ruffian's infulting a woman here; as the fecond, I fhall defend her from infult any where."—" You be d—d!" cried Belgrave; " you impudent puppy, do you think that black ftock makes you on a footing with a gentleman?" Belgrave's companions had by this time wifely retired; for, as I was not *their* purfuit, they faw no occafion to incur the danger of a quarrel in it. The only anfwer the ftranger gave to this additional infolence of Belgrave was a violent blow, which drove the aggreffor againft the fide of the wainfcot, that in fo narrow a room prevented his falling; and then young Newill, feizing him by the collar, with a fudden jerk threw him out of the room, and fhut the door. The noife all this made brought Mrs. New-

ill down ſtairs, who demanded of her ſon what was the matter? He anſwered, that ſome brutal officers, very drunk, had inſulted a young lady who had taken ſhelter in that room, and whom he had reſcued from their impertinence by turning them out of it. His mother, in additional conſternation, then turned to me, "What!" ſaid ſhe, "it was you, miſs, was it? And I ſuppoſe the gentleman was Sir John Belgrave—Fine doings! And ſo, William, this is the way you affront my friends?"

"I care not whoſe friends I affront," replied he: "if they behave like brutes to a woman, I would affront them if they were emperors." His mother, who I am afraid had been ſolacing herſelf above ſtairs with ſome of thoſe remedies to which ſhe often applied for conſolation, now began to cry and lament herſelf; and, in her pathetic complaints, bemoaned her ill luck that had given her an apprentice that, ſo far from being an aſſiſtant, was only a trouble to her, and did nothing but offend her cuſtomers. Young Newill then, for the firſt

time, underſtood that I was this apprentice; and as I ſat weeping in a corner, I ſaw he pitied me—" Come, come, Madam," ſaid he to his mother, " no more of this, if you pleaſe—nobody has offended your cuſtomers; but, on the contrary, your cuſtomers, as you call them, have offended me; let us look a little after this good friend of yours, perhaps he may have ſome farther commands for me—it is unhandſome to ſink ſuch a fine fair-weather jack, without lending a hand to heave him up." He then, in deſpite of his mother's entreaties, opened the door; but no Sir John Belgrave appeared, and the ſailor obſerved that he had ſet all his canvas and ſcudded off. " So now, dear mother," ſaid he, " pr'ythee let's have no more foul weather; but let us ſit down to ſupper, for I'm ſure this young woman muſt be glad of ſomething after her fright—poor little ſoul, how ſhe trembles ſtill!—and you ſhould remember that I have rode from Portſmouth ſince dinner, and a ſeaman juſt come from a two months cruiſe muſt eat." Mrs. Newill

ſtill

ſtill however appearing to think more of Sir John Belgrave than her ſon, he became preſently impatient; and going out to a neighbouring inn, he ordered a ſupper and ſome kind of wine or punch; which being ſoon brought, Mrs. Newill conſented to partake of it, though ſhe ſtill behaved to me with ſuch rude reſerve, that I would immediately have retired, if young Newill had not inſiſted on my ſitting down to ſupper with them, and I was too much obliged to him to refuſe."

"You were certainly obliged to him," ſaid Orlando in a hurried voice; "but after ſuch a ſcene I wonder you were able to remain with theſe people—What ſort of a man is young Newill? Is he a well-looking man?"

"Yes," replied Monimia, "rather ſo; but I hardly knew then how he looked—and in the ſcene I have deſcribed, I rather recollected it afterwards, than attended to it at the time."

"Pardon me," interrupted Orlando, with quickneſs—"you muſt have attended

to

to it at the time, or you could not have recollected it afterwards. Have you often seen this Mr. Newill since? What is become of him now?"

"He is gone to sea," replied Monimia.

"You have not then seen him since?"

"Yes, certainly I have—I saw him the next day,"

"Where?" cried Orlando, impatiently.

"I was obliged," answered Monimia, "because Mrs. Newill was now going immediately to join her imprisoned husband, to be up early to pack up some things in the shop for the person who had bought them; and while I did it, all my sorrows pressing with insupportable weight on my mind, and above all, your loss, Orlando—I wept as I proceeded in my task of tying up band-boxes and parcels, and yet I hardly knew I wept; when young Newill entered the place where I was, and offered to help me—"Good God!" said he, "you are crying!" He took my hand, it was wet with tears."

"And he kissed them off," cried Orlando, again wildly starting from his chair,

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"I know he did—yes! this ſtranger, infinitely more dangerous than Belgravé ...."

"Oh! dear Orlando," ſaid Monimia, with a deep and tremulous ſigh, "what is it you ſuſpect me of? Do not, I beſeech you, deſtroy me as ſoon as we have met, by ſuſpicions, which indeed, if you will hear me with patience ......"

"Go on, Monimia," ſaid he, recovering himſelf—"go on, and I will be as patient as I can—but this Newill"—"Always," ſaid Monimia, "behaved to me like the tendereſt brother, and it is to him alone I am indebted for the ſafety and protection I have found. Yet it is true, Orlando, and I will not attempt to conceal it from you, that young Newill in this firſt interview profeſſed himſelf my lover; but when I aſſured him that all my affections were buried with you, that it was out of my power to make him any other return to the regard he expreſſed for me, than gratitude; and if he would be ſo much my friend as to influence his mother, either to prevail upon my aunt to receive me, or

to let me remain with any creditable person in the country, inſtead of taking me to London (where I had too much reaſon to believe I was to be expoſed anew to the perſecutions of Sir John Belgrave), I ſhould be eternally indebted to him—this he promiſed to undertake, and ſeemed to acquieſce in my refuſal of his addreſſes, which, had I been capable of liſtening to them, it would have been very indiſcreet on his part to have purſued; for he was poſſeſſed of nothing but the pay of a midſhipman, and out of that little had often contributed to relieve the diſtreſſes of his parents; and now on hearing of his father's confinement, immediately after his return from a cruiſe, in which the frigate he was on board had taken two ſmall prizes, he haſtened to their aſſiſtance; and bearing with ſailor-like philoſophy all preſent evils, and never conſidering thoſe of the future, he was treating for the advance of his pay for the next half year, in order to enable his mother to diſcharge ſome debts for which her creditors were very clamorous,

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before ſhe left the town. Yet did he, under ſuch circumſtances, think very ſeriouſly of a wife—I believe that he ſuppoſed the dejection of my ſpirits was rather owing to my forlorn ſituation, than to an attachment which he had no notion of as exiſting after the death of its object, and that I ſhould gradually be induced to liſten to his love."

"Yet," cried Orlando warmly, "yet you talk of the brotherly and of the diſintereſted regard of this new friend of yours."

"It was ſo in effect, Orlando; and I did not too minutely enquire into the motive of his conduct. Allow me to go on and you will own that we are both much obliged to him. When he fully underſtood the nature of my ſituation, my invincible averſion to Sir John Belgrave, and my fears, which, mortifying as they muſt be to him, I could not help expreſſing, leſt his father ſhould prevail on Mrs. Newill to betray me entirely into his power—he expreſſed in his rough ſea language ſo much pity for me, and ſo much indignation at the con-

duct

duct of his family, that I became persuaded I might trust him. But, alas! I had nothing to entrust him with—no means of escape from the evils I dreaded to propose to him—except Mrs. Roker, I had no friend or relation in the world.—I had written three letters to Selina, but I received no answer—and she too had, I feared, by the troubles of her own family, been compelled to appear for a while unmindful of her unhappy Monimia.——Young Mr. Newill desired a few hours to consider what he could do for me; and in that time he talked to his mother of her ungenerous and base conduct in regard to me, with so much effect, that, after a struggle between her necessities and her conscience, she promised her son to receive no more the bribes of Sir John Belgrave, and even to let me quit her, if I insisted upon it. Having obtained thus much, he returned to me, and I was then to determine whither I would go. Oh! how gladly would I then have accepted of the lowest service! But who would take a creature apparently so slight

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as not to be able to do any kind of houſe-hold work; and from ſuch a woman as Mrs. Newill, who was but little eſteemed either for her morals or her œconomy? In this diſtreſs I wrote again to Selina, entreating her to enquire for a place for me; but no anſwer came in the uſual courſe of the poſt, and Newill's leave of abſence expiring in three days, it became neceſſary to determine on ſomething. Fruitleſs as every written application had hitherto been to Mrs. Roker, I could think of nothing better than to addreſs her in perſon; and as I dared not go ſo far alone, being ever in apprehenſion of meeting Sir John Belgrave, Mr. Newill offered to go with me, and ...."

"How did you go?" ſaid Orlando, interrupting her.

"In the ſtage to Alresford," replied Monimia; "and from thence we walked to the houſe, where, however, I was refuſed admittance by a ſiſter of Roker's, who told me her poor dear ſiſter-in-law was in a bad ſtate of health; that nobody could be admitted

mitted to ſee her; and adviſed me by all means not to depend upon any thing ſhe could do for me, ſince her condition put all attention to buſineſs out of the queſtion; and Miſs Roker was ſorry indeed to remind me, that my perverſe undutiful behaviour had not a little contributed to derange the faculties of my worthy relation. I could have anſwered, that her faculties were certainly deranged when ſhe married Mr. Roker; but I had no opportunity to make this obſervation if I had had courage enough—for the woman ſhut the door in my face, repeating in very rude terms, "that any viſits there would be to no purpoſe."

"Thus driven from the habitation of my only relation, I returned more broken-hearted than I ſet out to Wincheſter."

"And your protector, I ſuppoſe, renewed his ſolicitations by the way?" ſaid Orlando.

"No indeed," anſwered Monimia, "he had too much ſenſibility; and whatever he might intend for the future, he too much

reſpected

respected the grief into which this cruel repulse had plunged me. The next day but one he was to go back to his duty, with a young shipmate who was visiting his mother then at Southampton, who was to call upon him, that they might return together. While I was yet undetermined what to do, time passed away, and this comrade of Mr. Newill's arrived. It was young Fleming, the eldest son of your friend, whom his mother's relation, an old captain of a man of war, had taken from Winchester college at eighteen, and adopted at his father's death upon condition of his becoming a sailor—a condition which Mrs. Fleming, who had so recently lost her husband, lamented, but dared not oppose: War had just deprived her of her first support; yet him on whom she next relied she was compelled to part with for the same dreadful trade, because her pension, as a lieutenant's widow, which was almost her sole dependence, was very insufficient for the support of her four other children; the two little girls you saw with me last night,

another yet younger, and her fecond boy, whom her relation partly fupports at an academy, intending him alfo for the fea; and who would have been fo much offended, had fhe thwarted him in regard to taking the eldeft fon from college, that he would have renounced the whole family.

"To this young man, who was his moft intimate friend, Newill communicated, but not without firft afking my permiffion, the difficulties I was under; concealing however thofe circumftances that feemed to reflect fo much difgrace on his mother. They confulted together what I could do..."

"Excellent and proper counfellors truly!" exclaimed Orlando impatiently.

"Lefs improper than you imagine," replied Monimia. "Fleming had not, like Newill, been fo long at fea as to acquire that fteadinefs of mind which enables men of that profeffion to look on all perfonal danger with indifference, and on moral evil as a matter of courfe. But yet, recollecting not only his claffics, but the romances he had delighted in at fchool, he had that

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natural and acquired tenderneſs of mind which made him ſenſible at once of all the diſcomforts of my ſituation. He ſaw in me a poor, deſerted heroine of a novel, and nothing could be in his opinion ſo urgent as my relief.—Accuſtomed in all emergencies to apply to his mother, to whom he is the moſt affectionate and dutiful of ſons . . . ."

"What is become of this Fleming?" enquired Orlando, "is he often at home with his mother?"

"No; he went almoſt immediately after my firſt becoming acquainted with her, to the Eaſt-Indies—but your impatience, Orlando, will not let me conclude my ſad ſtory. Fleming ſeeing the affair in the light I have deſcribed, ſettled with his friend Newill that the latter ſhould return alone to the ſhip—make ſome excuſe for Fleming's being abſent two days longer, while he would return to his mother, and endeavour by her means to find ſome proper aſylum for me. The readineſs with

which Newill consented to this plan, convinced me of his disinterestedness; though I own I had little hope of its success. I supposed that Mrs. Fleming would have suspected the zeal of so young a man for a woman of my age, in distress, and would decline interfering for a person of whom she could know nothing. But the generosity of my young advocate rendered him eloquent; and she to whom he pleaded was not only naturally of the most candid and humane disposition, but her own sorrows had so softened her heart, that calamity never pleaded to her in vain, though her circumstances are such as do not always enable her to relieve it, as her heart dictates.

"This excellent woman reflected, that there must be something remarkable in the situation which had made so great an impression on her son; and that even if I was a young woman whom necessity had reduced to a discreditable mode of life, her kindness might yet save me from deeper destruction.

destruction. With this humane persuasion, and remembering always the maxim of doing as she would be done by, she came herself to Winchester, to enquire what she could do for me—thinking, as she has since told me, that she ought to do this, if she hoped for the mercy of Heaven towards her own girls, who might, by so likely an event as her death, be as desolate and friendless as I was. I am too much exhausted, Orlando, to be particular now in relating our first interview. We shall, I hope, have frequent opportunities of admiring the simplicity of character, the goodness of heart, and the attractive manners of my benefactress, who, from your description of your mother, is almost her counterpart. It is sufficient if I tell you that Mrs. Fleming not only implicitly believed my melancholy story, but, as nothing immediately occurred to her for my permanent relief, determined to take me home with her, till some eligible situation could be found. When she had been a

little accuſtomed to me, ſhe would not part with me; I have been ſo happy as to make myſelf uſeful to her and her children; and in acquitting myſelf as far as I could of my debt of gratitude, I have found the beſt and only defence againſt that regret and anguiſh which devoured me. She had ſorrows enough of her own; I forbore therefore to oppreſs her with mine, and I tried to be calm when I could not be cheerful; but when the converſation turned on the loſs ſhe had ſuſtained in her huſband, I mingled my tears with hers, and wept for Orlando."

Orlando, forgetting in this tender confeſſion the little jealouſies he had felt, while he conſidered her liable to the addreſſes of a rival, now preſſed her fondly to his heart; and ſeeing her quite overcome by the fatigue of relating ſo long a narrative, and the vio'ence of thoſe emotions ſhe had ſo lately experienced, conſented to leave her, and they parted for the night; though Orlando could not wiſh her good night without

out protefting to her that he would never again confent to be feparated from her, even for a day; for that if ever he was abfent from her again, the infolent Sir John Belgrave would inceffantly purfue her in imagination, and he fhould believe her exposed again to dangers and infults which it almoft drove him to madnefs to recollect fhe had already endured.

CHAP. X.

IN retiring to the room Mrs. Fleming had ordered to be prepared for him, Orlando attempted not to ſleep: but his imagination was buſied in conſidering how, ſince he had ſo unexpectedly found Monimia, he might eſcape the miſery of ever again parting with her. Poor as he was, he had long ſince determined, that if ſhe was reſtored to him, he would marry her, and truſt to Providence, and his own exertions, for her ſupport:—and ſince he had heard all the dangers, trials, and inſults, to which her unprotected and deſolate ſituation had made her liable, he could not bear to think of ever quitting her again, even for a day.

Yet, circumſtanced as he was, their immediate union was attended with innumer-

able

able difficulties: his mother would, he feared, be secretly averse, though she might not openly oppose it; and as to deceiving her, he would not think of it.

Monimia, being under age, could not be married without the consent of her aunt, her only near relation, which he knew it would be impossible to obtain; and all the other impediments were in the way which occur in regard to a minor, and which there seemed no ways of obviating but by a journey to Scotland. Yet the business of the disputed will, so very important to him, was to come on, as he believed, the ensuing Term, and it was to begin in a few days; a consideration that, added to the expence of such a journey, out of his little fortune, which was reduced within an hundred and fifty pounds, made him hesitate concerning an expedition so distant and expensive. After long debates with himself, he recollected that Warwick had been married to Isabella at Jersey or Guernsey; and as he was so near the coast, from whence a passage to those islands might be obtained,

he refolved to propofe fuch an excurfion to Monimia, and to procure the confent of the friend to whofe kindnefs fhe was fo much indebted.

This was not difficult; for Mrs. Fleming, prejudiced in favour of Orlando, on account of the friendfhip her hufband had for him, and believing that his mind poffeffed all thofe virtues his ingenuous countenance and liberal manners expreffed;—knowing too how truly her young friend was attached to him, imagined that fhe muft be happy in fuch a union, whatever might be their pecuniary difficulties. Monimia had no will but his; and no anxiety now hung on the mind of Orlando, but in regard to his mother.—He doubted whether he ought not to confult her before he married; yet as her difapprobation would only render him and Monimia unhappy, without changing his refolution, he concluded it would be beft to truft to her affection for him, and the impreffion which Monimia's beauty and innocence could not, he thought, fail to make in her favour, when he prefented her

her to his mother, as his wife. Very little preparation was necessary for their short voyage.—Mrs. Fleming gave her blessing to the weeping Monimia as she parted with her, and gave it with a tenderness and fervency not always found in the friends who surround the brides of higher fortune.—It was agreed that the young couple should return to her as soon as they were married, and go from thence to London.

Orlando found no difficulty in procuring a vessel to transport them to Guernsey.—Notwithstanding the season of the year, the weather was mild, and the wind favourable. Within ten days from their departure, Orlando brought back his wife to Mrs. Fleming's solitude, secure that death alone could divide them.

They remained with their respectable friend only two days. It was now time for Orlando to be in London, and they hastened thither, too happy to reflect on what was to become of them, and with no other solicitude on their minds, than what arose from the idea of their first meeting with

Mrs. Somerive.—And this dwelt more on the ſpirits of Orlando, than he choſe to communicate to his wife.

On their arrival in town, he ordered the chaiſe to the chambers of his friend Carr, as he would not abruptly introduce Monimia to his mother. He went alone to procure a lodging in the neighbourhood of his family; which being eaſily found, they took poſſeſſion of it in the evening—as Orlando required yet ſome time to prepare himſelf for diſcloſing a ſecret, which he ſtill feared, manage it how he would, might give pain to his mother.

About one o'clock, however, the following morning he went to Howland-ſtreet. His mother, who had been very uneaſy at his long abſence, received him with even more than her uſual affection; but her expreſſions of pleaſure at ſeeing him, were mingled with tears. All that had happened to his brother, had come to her knowledge; and to his exceſſive concern, he heard that Philip, after applying to his mother for money, with which ſhe could not ſupply him,

him, had again diſappeared, and was, as they had reaſon to believe, again impriſoned.

In beholding his mother under ſuch depreſſion of mind, he could not determine to inform her of what might poſſibly add to it; but inſtead of ſpeaking to her of Monimia, as he intended, he endeavoured to appeaſe the agony of her mind about Philip, whom he promiſed to find, and gave her hopes that they ſhould ſucceed in the recovery of the Rayland eſtate. To Selina alone he communicated his recent marriage; and found with additional concern, that ſhe dreaded the effect this intelligence would have on her mother, who was already overwhelmed with anxiety for her eldeſt ſon, and whoſe maternal grief had been lately awakened by having heard that her daughter Iſabella was certainly living in one of the American iſlands with her huſband, long after they had been given over for loſt:—yet, as ſhe had never heard from them, ſhe concluded that her daughter, if yet living, was totally eſtranged from

from her family, or regardlefs of their diftrefs; a reflection not lefs bitter than it was to confider her as dead. The doubt of what was really her fate, proved perhaps more diftreffing than any certainty. With all this, were Orlando's marriage to be difcovered to her, while fhe was continually expreffing her anxiety how he would himfelf be fupported, Selina dreaded the confequence of her uneafinefs; and therefore entreated Orlando to defer the difcovery at leaft for a few days, in hopes that fomething favourable might happen; while fhe herfelf expreffed the warmeft folicitude to fee and embrace Monimia, as her beloved fifter; and they agreed that Orlando fhould find fome pretence to take her the next day out with him, and carry her to his lodgings for that purpofe.

With an heavy heart he now returned to Monimia, who anxioufly expected him.—A poor diffembler, he could not conceal from her the ftate of his mind; but he led her to believe it was rather owing to the new diftrefs occafioned by Philip's difappearance,

pearance, than to any doubts as to her reception by his mother. Her gentle and soothing conversation was the only balm for his wounded heart; and while he felt himself unhappy, he considered how much less so he was now, than when, in addition to the calamities of his family, he had the loss of his Monimia to lament, and the dread of all those evils to which her desolate state exposed her.

As soon as he had dined, he set out, in pursuance of his promise to his mother, to find Philip; but while Carr sent his clerk, and went himself to some of the places where it was but too probable he was to be found, Orlando himself visited another; but when they met at night at Carr's chambers, all their enquiries were found equally fruitless; and theyagreed, that if this unhappy young man was, as there was two much reason to believe, in confinement, he had taken precautions not to be discovered. With this unsatisfactory intelligence, Orlando, late as it was, went back to his mother; but, assuring her he would never

never reſt till he had found out and relieved his brother, he told her, that as he muſt now be conſtantly engaged with Mr. Carr in arranging the buſineſs of the law-ſuit, and muſt be at his chambers early in a morning, he had taken a lodging near him, the time of going ſo far as from Howland-ſtreet to the inn of court being more than he could now ſpare. This accounted for his abſence tolerably well; yet his heart ſmote him for this temporary deception, which was however, conſidering his circumſtances at this juncture, only a pious fraud.

Another, another, and another day paſſed away without any news of Philip; and, to add to the vexation of Orlando, he found new difficulties likely to ariſe in his ſuit. Old Roker, to whom ſubornation of perjury was familiar, and every other infamous device which an unprincipled villain could be guilty of, had not only taken the uſual method of gaining time by artificial delays, but was, it was feared, putting it out of Mrs. Roker's (Lennard's) power to give her teſtimony againſt the will that had been

proved,

proved, by making her a lunatic; he was infamous enough to have taken ftill more decifive means of quieting both her confcience and her evidence, if they had not been rendered lefs eligible by the circumftance of great part of her income having been left her for her life only.

Carr, who had all the zeal of a young man for his client, and was perfectly convinced, from the fubftance of Mr. Walterfon's report, that there had been another will, was yet doubtful of their fuccefs againft the impudence and chicane of the Rokers; fupported by two fuch powerful motives, as their own intereft, and the purfe of a rich body of clergy. Orlando therefore faw with anguifh of mind his own little fund dwindling away, without any certainty that fuch part of it as went to the payment of law expences would ever be repaid him: and the fad idea of Monimia in as great poverty as that from which he had refcued her, continually corroded his heart; while fhe, from his long delay in prefenting her to his mother, and from the

knowledge

knowledge ſhe had of his little fortune, perceived but too clearly, in a depreſſion of ſpirits which he could not always diſguiſe, what were his fears. Theſe ſhe tried to diſſipate, by aſſuming herſelf an air of cheerfulneſs—"I have always been uſed to work, Orlando," ſaid ſhe—"you know that I never was brought up to any other expectation—where then will be the difficulty or the hardſhip of my employing myſelf to aſſiſt in our mutual ſupport? and ſurely it will be better to begin now, than to wait till our neceſſities become more preſſing. Since I ſhall not diſgrace your family by it; ſince I am unknown to every body but Selina, who has too much ſenſe to love me leſs, why ſhould I not directly engage in what ſooner or later I muſt, I ought to have recourſe to?"——Orlando, who thought that all the world ought to be at the feet of a creature whoſe mind ſeemed to him even more lovely than her perſon, was ſo hurt and mortified whenever ſhe thus expreſſed herſelf, that ſhe by degrees ceaſed to repeat it; but as he was

now

now very much out with Carr, ſhe contrived in his abſence to apply to a very conſiderable linen ware-houſe in the neighbourhood, the proprietors of which at firſt truſted her with articles of ſmall value to make; by degrees ſhe acquired their confidence! and, by the neatneſs and punctuality of her performance, entered ſoon into conſtant employment.—Orlando ſaw her always buſy; but he made no remarks on what occupied her; and without ſhocking his tenderneſs or his pride, ſhe was thus enabled to add a little to the ſlender ſtock on which depended their ſubſiſtence. Thus in continual combats with himſelf, whether he ought not to acquaint his mother with his ſituation, in fruitleſs enquiries after his brother, and in hopes and fears about the event of his ſuit, paſſed the firſt ſix weeks of his marriage.—Term was now over, and the diſcovery of the true will of Mrs. Rayland did not ſeem to be at all nearer than when he firſt undertook it.

Encouraged, however, by his friend Carr, to proceed, though he often trembled

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at the proofs that came to his knowledge, of the ſucceſsful villany of Roker, Orlando failed not to purſue ſuch means as his ſolicitor thought moſt requiſite; and, amid all the fatigue and diſappointments of the law's delay, which often baffled him where he moſt ſanguinely hoped for advantage, the tenderneſs, the ſweetneſs of Monimia ſoothed and tranquillized his troubled ſpirits; and when he returned to her of an evening, wearied with the contradictory opinions of counſel, or tormented by trifling and unneceſſary forms, he ſeemed to be tranſported from purgatory to paradiſe, and forgot that, if ſome favourable event did not ſoon occur, he ſhould be unable to ſupport this adored being, to whom he was more fondly attached as an huſband than he had been as a lover.

His mother, who had been at firſt ſatiſfied with his reaſons for abſenting himſelf from her houſe, now began (ſince his law-buſineſs was ſhe thought for a while ſuſpended) to expreſs her uneaſineſs that he no longer reſided with her. To the ex-

preſſion of this diſcontent ſhe was particularly excited by her brother, Mr. Woodford, whoſe boiſterous manners, though ſoftened even to mean obſequiouſneſs before his ſuperiors, were ſtill exerted to keep in ſubjection the mild and timid ſpirit of his ſiſter, who conſidered herſelf beſides as obliged to him, becauſe he had afforded her ſome ſmall pecuniary aſſiſtance, rather to preſerve his own pride from being wounded, than to oblige or ſerve her.

Orlando, extremely diſguſted by the reception he met with at the houſe of his uncle on his arrival in London, had never again viſited him; and had avoided, as if by accident, meeting him at his mother's; where he did not indeed often viſit, being become a much richer, and conſequently a much greater man, ſince he had been the *oſtenſible* poſſeſſor of a very lucrative contract, which he held to ſo much advantage as reconciled him to the neceſſity of relinquiſhing a ſeat in parliament for a Corniſh borough, with which he had obliged ſome of his powerful friends. He was not there-

fore a *repreſentative of twenty or thirty electors, who had been paid for their ſuffrages at ſo much a head*; but ſuch were now his qualifications of purſe and of pride, that he was admitted to the cabals of thoſe who had the diſtinction of an M. P. after their names; and was often cloſeted with the ſecretaries of yet greater men, conſulted on loans, let into the ſecret of ſtocks, and was accommodated with ſcrip and other douceurs with which thoſe who *deſerve well of government* are gratified; he was beſides a director of an opulent company, and received, in addition to the ſalary of the office, conſiderable preſents from thoſe who had favours to requeſt. Mrs. Woodford waddled about in the moſt valuable ſhawls; mandarins and joſſes nodded over her chimneys; and pagodas and japans ornamented her rooms. The two young ladies were both married; the elder to a merchant, who was a ſharer in ſome of the fortunate adventures of his father-in-law, and beſides in a flouriſhing buſineſs. His lady was one of the elegant and faſhionable

 women

women on the other ſide Temple-bar: but the little circumſtance of her being compelled to live on that other ſide, continually embittered her good fortune: having been accuſtomed to ſee people who are called of rank, in the early part of her life, ſhe was ſo much flattered by having acquired admiſſion to ſome few now, that ſhe talked of nothing but lords. If ſhe related what happened at the opera, Lord Robert was ſitting by her at the time, and ſaid ſo and ſo; if ſhe ſpoke of her loſſes or ſucceſſes at cards, Lady Frances or Lady Louiſa were her party; and ſometimes Sir James or Sir George betted on her ſide: but whenever this equeſtrian order were introduced, ſhe took care to impreſs upon the minds of her audience, that ſhe ſpoke of men who really bore the arms of Ulſter, and not of any paltry city knight; whom, together with every thing in the city, ſhe held in ſovereign contempt; having quite forgotten herſelf, and deſiring that every body elſe ſhould forget the preceding years, when ſhe was a wine-merchant's daughter

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in the Strand, and glad of an hackney-coach to a benefit play; or ſupremely happy to be acquainted with any one who kept their own carriage, and would take her "to the other end of the town."

The acquaintance and notice of General Tracy had been almoſt their firſt ſtep towards emerging from middling life to the confines of faſhion; therefore the lady now in queſtion, and her ſiſter, who was become the wife of a counſellor in Lincoln's-inn-fields, were never able to forgive the Somerive family, for having firſt faſcinated the uncle, and then the nephew, whoſe notice they had always coveted, becauſe he was among the firſt of thoſe who had obtained the name of "a faſhionable man about town," and one whoſe approbation was deciſive in determining on the beauty and elegance of the female candidates for general admiration.

Young Woodford too, though he had failed of marrying the rich young Jeweſs, either becauſe of his indifference towards her, or of the preference ſhe gave at the time

time he was firſt acquainted with her to Orlando, had ſince married the daughter of a great underwriter, and was in high affluence. The whole of the Woodford family, being thus circumſtanced, looked down with contempt on the remains of that of Somerive; and, under the ſemblance of pity, enjoyed their depreſſion, particularly that of Orlando, of whom, in talking of him to his mother, Mr. Woodford affected to ſpeak with great concern.

"'Tis of no uſe," ſaid he, "to remember what is paſſed, ſince to be ſure it only ſerves to vex one; but I muſt ſay, it was a thouſand pities, ſiſter Somerive, that you ſuffered this young man to refuſe the advantageous offer that I made him. If I had taken him into my houſe, only think how differently he would have been ſituated from what he is now!—God bleſs my ſoul, I declare 'tis a ſad thing!—In the firſt place, he would have been now as well off as Martin my partner is now, which, let me tell you, is no bad thing; beſides that as

my nephew, and in partnerſhip with *me*, he might have married, let me tell you, any woman of fortune in the city, and might now be a man of the firſt conſideration; nay, in parliament for aught I know.—Inſtead of that, what is the caſe now?—Firſt of all, there was waiting upon and coaxing that fooliſh, proud old woman, who after all did nothing for him; but ſaw him ſet off with a brown muſket, to be ſhot at for half a-crown a day, or whatever it is; and then forſooth left her eſtate to a parcel of fat-gut parſons, as if that would do her old ſqueezy ſoul any good in t'other world—For my part, I don't deſire to vex you—what is done, why, it cannot be helped: only I muſt ſay that 'tis a deviliſh kettle of fiſh altogether. Here, inſtead of this young fellow's being an help to you, he is like, for what I can ſee, to be a burthen. Since things are as they are, I ſee no reaſon why he ſhould be humoured in idleneſs now, and, under pretence of following up this law-ſuit, lounge away any more of his time: as to the recovery of the Rayland eſtate,

you

you may as well ſue for ſo many acres in the moon; take my word for it, ſiſter Somerive."

This brutiſh ſpeech being anſwered only by the ſighs and tears of the dejected auditor, her conſequential brother ſtopped a moment for breath, and then proceeded:

"However, don't be caſt down: you know that though my opinion has always gone for nothing, I am always willing to ſerve you, ſiſter; and ſo I wiſh you would, before 'tis too late, and before your youngeſt ſon goes the way of your eldeſt, think a little of making him do ſomething to get himſelf on in the world:—for my part, and I'm ſure every body as knows any thing of life and human nature, will agree with me, that the boy will be undone if he goes on as he does at preſent; and I give you warning, that in a little time there won't be a pin to chooſe between him and that hopeful youth, 'ſquire Philip."

This was almoſt too much for poor Mrs. Somerive, who however commanded her

tears and ſobs ſo far as to aſk her brother what reaſon he had to think ſo.

He then communicated to her, as he aſſured her in perfect friendſhip, that there was great reaſon to ſuppoſe Orlando kept a miſtreſs, and was laviſhing on her the ſmall remains of the money his commiſſion had ſold for; and upon her beſeeching him to tell her what reaſon he had to believe ſo, he informed her that not only it was falſe that Orlando had taken a lodging near the inns of court in order to be near Carr, but that he actually lived within two ſtreets of his mother's houſe, with a young woman who had of late been frequently met with him of an evening, leaning on his arm, and whom, on enquiry, he was found to have brought with him from the country.

Thunderſtruck with intelligence which Orlando's general air of abſence and impatience when he was with his family gave her too much reaſon to believe was true, and dreading leſt ſhe had loſt the ſole ſtay on which ſhe depended for the protection of her two girls in caſe of her death, the unhappy

happy mother gave herſelf up to tears, nor could the rough hand of her cruel brother ſucceed in drying them. Diſtreſſed ſo cruelly, ſhe caught eagerly at whatever had the appearance of relieving her, and therefore promiſed to adhere to the advice Mr. Woodford gave her. He recommended it to her to preſs Orlando's return to her houſe: "by which," ſaid he, "you will ſoon find out, if you don't believe it yet, that your pious good boy is not a whit better than t'other. And let me alſo deſire you'll not let him go on helter ſkelter in this law-ſuit, with no better advice than a whiffled-headed fellow ſuch as Carr can give him or get for him; but ſend him to Mr. Darby, my ſon-in-law, a man I can tell you that knows what he's about, and is a thriving man in the law. He ſhall not charge any thing upon your account for his advice; ſo you'll ſave five or ten guineas at once. I'll ſpeak to Mr. Darby; and in the mean time, d'ye ſee, do you have ſome ſerious converſation with your ſon. Let him find out that we are not ſo eaſily to be

gull'd; and that 'twont do to take old birds with chaff."

Mrs. Somerive then promifed to do as he dictated; and he left her, after this converfation, one of the moft miferable beings on earth.

Orlando, the next time he faw his mother, found the effects of his uncle's ungenerous interference. She received him with an air of conftraint to which he was little accuftomed, and which feemed to be attended with extreme pain to herfelf: fhe queftioned him in a tone fhe had never taken up before; feemed diffatisfied with his anfwers, which certainly were embarraffed and contradictory; and ended the converfation with telling him that, unlefs he would extremely difoblige her, he muft lay the whole ftate of the queftion as to the Rayland eftate before Mr. Darby, his coufin's hufband. This Orlando promifed to do, being very defirous of obliging his mother wherever he could do it without betraying a fecret which he thought it would diftrefs her to know; and, defirous to end as foon

as he could a converſation ſo painful, he agreed to go directly to Carr, and procure a proper ſtate of the affair for the opinion of counſel; and to wait on Mr. Darby the next morning, againſt which time Mrs. Somerive was to give him notice, by Mr. Woodford, of the application of this client.

Orlando owed too much to the good nature, integrity, and induſtry of his friend Carr, not to uſe the greateſt precaution againſt offending him; but the moment he opened his buſineſs, and told him what his mother had inſiſted upon, Carr very candidly offered to promote this application without prejudice to thoſe he had already made; and the caſe, and ſteps already taken in the buſineſs, having been prepared, Orlando waited the next day on Mr. Darby according to his own appointment, and for the firſt time was introduced to him at once as his couſin and his client. The lady, formerly Miſs Eliza Woodford, "kept her ſtate;" and Orlando, inſtead of being ſhewn into her dreſſing-room to wait till Mr. Darby ſhould be at liberty to ſpeak

to him, as he would naturally have been if he had fortunately been a rich relation, was ſhewn into a back room, ſurrounded by books that ſeemed more for ſhew than uſe, and deſired to wait.

Here he remained more than half an hour, before his relation learned in the law appeared. He was a tall, awkward, rawboned man, with a pale face, two ſmall wild grey eyes, and a ſquirrel-coloured riding-wig; who, having coldly ſaluted his new acquaintance, took his caſe, and, looking ſlightly over it as Orlando explained his ſituation, he ſaid (drawing in his breath at every word, and doubling in his lips ſo that they diſappeared)—"Hum, hah; hum—I ſee.....Hum, hum, hum; I obſerve a!—Hum a!—I perceive a!—Yes a—Hum!—dean and chapter—hum; ſo a—Doctor Hollybourn a, hum—I know him—hum a—know him a little......" Then rubbing his forehead, added, "a reſpectable—hum! a—man, a—a Doctor Hollybourn—man of very conſiderable, hum, a—property, a—hum, a——"

Orlando,

Orlando, marvelling how this man, with his inverted lips, and the hum-a's that broke every ſecond word, could be reckoned to make a reſpectable figure at the bar, now began, as the eloquent counſel was ſilent, another explanatory ſpeech; which, however, he was not allowed to finiſh, for Mr. Darby, again aſſuring him that Doctor Hollybourn was very rich, and of courſe very reſpectable, ſaid, he could not think that—hum, a—the doctor, ſo worthy a man as he was, would be acceſſary in—hum a, injuring any one, or keeping the right heir out of his eſtate; but, hum a—hum a—there muſt be ſome miſrepreſentation: but that, however, he was engaged that morning with two briefs, of the utmoſt importance; therefore, he would conſider the thing at his leiſure, and let him know in a few days—hum a—."——Orlando, then leaving his compliments to Mrs. Darby, haſtened away, rather repenting of his viſit, and having gained, he thought, nothing by it, but what was likely to end in a hum a!

On his return to Carr's chambers, his friend accosted him with an enquiry how he liked the special pleader?—"A special pleader d'ye call him?" cried Orlando; "for Heaven's sake, wherefore?"

"Because it is our name," replied Carr, "for a particular branch of our profession."

"Curse the fellow!" cried Orlando—"A special pleader! why he cannot speak at all—with his hum a, and hum a."

"That would not signify so much," said Carr, "if the man was honest; but I may say to you, that, under the most specious professions of honesty, I don't believe there is a more crafty or mercenary head in Westminster Hall, than that orange tawny caxon of his covers. The hesitation and embarrassment of his oratory was at first the effect of stupidity; but by degrees, as acquired chicane supplies the place of natural talent, he has continued it, because it is a sort of excuse for never giving an immediate or positive answer; and while he is hum a-ing and haw a-ing, he is often

considering

considering how he may beſt make his advantage of the affairs confided to him."

"Good God!" exclaimed Orlando; "and why, then, would you let me apply to ſuch a man?"

"Nay," replied Carr, "how could I pretend to engage you to decline a reference recommended by your mother? Beſides, you know, my friend, that in our profeſſion we make it a rule never to ſpeak as we think. What? would you have an apothecary declaim againſt a phyſician in whoſe practice it is to occaſion the greateſt demand for drugs?"

"Hang your ſimile!" ſaid Orlando: "I am afraid you are all rogues together."

"More or leſs, my good friend—ſome of more ſenſe than others, and ſome a little, little more conſcience—but, for the reſt, I am afraid we are all of us a little too much profeſſional rogues; though ſome of us, as individuals, would not ſtarve the orphan, or break the heart of the widow—but in our vocation, Hal! labouring in our vocation,

tion, we give all remorſe of that ſort to the winds."

"Would your profeſſion were annihilated, then!" cried Orlando.

"Why, I do not believe," anſwered Carr, "that the world would be much the worſe if it were; but, my friend, not to be too hard upon *us*, do reflect on the practices of other profeſſions. The little, ſmirking fellow, with ſo ſmiling an aſpect, and ſo well-powdered a head, whom you ſee paſs in his chariot, adminiſters to his patient the medicines a phyſician orders, though he knows they are more likely to kill than cure; and, in his account at night, thinks not of the tears of a family whom he has ſeen in the greateſt diſtreſs, but of the bill he ſhall have for medicines and attendance. The merchant, who ſits down in his compting-houſe, and writes to his correſpondent at Jamaica, that his ſhip, the Good Intent of Liverpool, is conſigned to him at Port-Royal with a cargo of ſlaves from the coaſt of Guinea, calculates the profits of a fortunate adventure, but never conſiders the

tears

tears and blood with which this money is to be raiſed. He hears not the groans of an hundred human creatures confined together in the hold of a ſmall merchantman —he . . . . . ."

"Do," cried Orlando, "dear Carr, finiſh your catalogue of human crimes, unleſs you have a mind to make me go home and hang myſelf."

"No man would do that," anſwered Carr, "who had ſuch a lovely wife as you have—ſhe would reconcile me to a much worſe world than this is."

The friends then parted; Orlando very far from being ſatisfied with his viſit to his couſin learned in the law—and very uneaſy, on his arrival at his mother's, to obſerve, in her behaviour to him, increaſed ſymptoms of that diſcontent he had obſerved the day before.

CHAP. XI.

NEARLY fix weeks more now paffed; another Term was almoft wafted in thofe contrived delays which deftroy all the boafted energy and fimplicity of the Britifh laws; when Mr. Carr advifed Orlando to fee Dr. Hollybourn himfelf; which, however difagreeable it was to him, he at length confented to do, at the earneft and repeated requeft of one who he believed had his real intereft much at heart. Orlando had lately fuffered fo much uneafinefs at the deception he had been and was ftill guilty of towards his mother, that he found it almoft impoffible for him to continue it; but he was continually withheld from the avowal he wifhed to make, by the tears of Selina, and by his fears for the effect that a reluctant, or even an affectionate recep-

tion.

tion might have on the timid ſpirits of his wife, whoſe ſituation increaſed his tenderneſs and anxiety; while his reduced finances filled him with the moſt painful ſolicitude, as he reflected that, when they were quite exhauſted, he ſhould have nothing to ſupport his Monimia and the infant he expected ſhe would give him.

Sacrificing to the remoteſt hope of benefiting objects ſo precious to him, his own reluctance to make a very diſagreeable viſit, he repaired to the reſidence of Dr. Hollybourn, at an hour when he was told the reverend Divine was moſt likely to be at home.

On his arrival, however, he heard the Doctor was out: but as a coach was waiting at the door, he doubted this: and, while he was yet ſpeaking to the footman at the door, another from the top of the ſtairs called out, "Let counſellor Darby's coach draw up!"—Orlando then ſtepped forward into the hall, telling the ſervant that he had very particular buſineſs with Dr. Hollybourn, and could not call again; therefore

therefore that he muſt ſee him:—at the ſame moment Mr. Darby himſelf hurried down ſtairs, and Orlando met him in the hall.—The lawyer ſeemed in as much confuſion when he met him, as ſuch a lawyer is capable of being: ſlightly bowing, and muttering ſomething of haſte as he paſſed, he hurried into his coach; while Orlando, without waiting for the return of the footman, who was gone up to announce him to the Doctor, walked up ſtairs, and entered a very elegant room, where the worthy Doctor, looking more than ever like the uncle of Gil Blas, was ſquatted on a ſopha, with ſome papers before him, which, on the appearance of Orlando (whom he was ordering his ſervant to diſmiſs), he huddled away in ſome confuſion.

Orlando now approached, and in few words opened his buſineſs, laying ſome ſtreſs upon the hardſhips he had ſuffered in being deprived of an eſtate to which his father was undoubtedly next heir, while it went to enrich a body who had no manner

ner of occafion for fuch an acquifition of wealth.

The divine profeffor of humility and charity—he who fome few months before offered his moft accomplifhed daughter to the then fortunate Orlando, now deigned not to afk him to fit; but, cocking up his little red nofe, and plumping down again on his cufhion, he began to fnuffle forth his wonder at this application. He faid, "God forbid, young man, that I, as executor to the late worthy lady of Rayland Hall, whofe foul is now with the bleffed, fhould defraud you or any man! But that pious woman, the laft remains of an ancient, honourable, and religious family, to be fure knew beft what would moft contribute to the glory of the Lord, and the good of his creatures; among the poor and needy of whom fhe left her noble fortune to be divided, and I fhall take care moft facredly to perform her worthy wifh, and to fanctify her eftate to the holy purpofes fhe intended it for."

Orlando, who could not command the

indignation he felt againſt this canting hypocrite, now very loudly and peremptorily demanded to know, "Whether Doctor Hollybourn was not well appriſed, that there was a will made by Mrs. Rayland, after that under which his ſociety claimed the eſtate? and whether two perſons had not declared, at Rayland Hall, that they knew it to be ſo, whoſe evidence Roker had ſince been employed to ſtifle?"—To this the Doctor ſaid, "He underſtood he was to reply upon oath in putting in his anſwer to the bill in chancery, and therefore he ſhould now ſay nothing: but if you, young man, have any thing more to ſay, you know where to find Mr. Roker, my ſolicitor; to him I refer you.—Here—Richard!—Peter!—John!—ſhew this perſon down!"—Orlando, by no means diſpoſed to ſubmit to this cavalier treatment, though the age and profeſſion of the Doctor protected him from the effects of the reſentment he felt, began however a more ſevere remonſtrance; which the Doctor not being diſpoſed to liſten to, roſe

from

from his ſopha, and with the grace of a terrier bitch on the point of pupping, he waddled into the next room, and ſhut the door. Orlando then finding his attempts to argue ſuch a ſordid and ſelfiſh being into any ſenſe of juſtice totally uſeleſs, left the houſe, and, returning to his friend Carr, related his adventures; where he had the mortification to have his ſuſpicions confirmed by Carr, that, ſo far from his application to Mr. Darby being likely to produce any good, there was every appearance that he had entered the liſts on the other ſide—"And this," ſaid Carr, "has been a frequent practice with him; it being with this worthy man an invariable maxim, inherited I believe from his father, that no man is poor, but from his own faults and follies—for which, though no man has been guilty of more than he has in the former part of his life, he profeſſes to have no pity—And as to law, he is not much out, nor was your honeſt friend the miller, in ſaying, that he who has the longeſt purſe

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is in this country the moſt frequently ſucceſsful."

Orlando, with an heart not much lightened by the tranſactions of the day, returned to his lodgings to a late dinner.—Monimia was ill, a circumſtance that added to the gloom that hung over him:—ſhe made light of it however, and endeavoured to reſtore to him that cheerfulneſs, of which, ſhe obſerved with great uneaſineſs, he had been ſome time deprived; but it is difficult to communicate to others ſenſations we do not feel ourſelves.—She ſmiled, but tears were in her eyes—She aſſured him ſhe ſuffered nothing; but he ſaw her pale and languid, and now was confirmed in what he had long fancied, that the air of London did not agree with her; and it was with inexpreſſible anguiſh he reflected, that now, when the tendereſt attention to her health was neceſſary, he was deprived of the means of procuring her country air, which, as ſpring advanced, ſhe ſeemed to languiſh for.—London, where ſhe had never been before, was at firſt unpleaſant, and

now disgusting to her; but she never betrayed this but by accident, and wished Orlando to believe that with him every place was to her a heaven.

He now more seldom went to his mother's than he used to do; because, since her dialogue with Mr. Woodford, all her tenderness for him did not prevent her teasing him with questions, and very earnestly pressing him to return to his usual apartment in her house. This somewhat estranged him from his family: but in absenting himself, he found no peace; for though he saw less of his mother and sisters than he used to do, he was as fondly attached to them as ever: and while he thought he saw, in the conduct of his mother, new reasons to adhere to that secrecy which it had already given him so much pain to observe, he imputed it all to the influence of the unfeeling and mercenary Mr. Woodford, and, in his most gloomy moods, wished that so unhappy a being as he was had never been born. A thousand times he repented of his having ever left

Rayland

Rayland Hall, to which unfortunate absence all his subsequent disappointments were owing; and sometimes lamented, though he could not repent, that he had married his Monimia, without being able to shield her, as his wife, from the poverty of her former lot.

Nothing gave him more mortification, than to find that his mother was not satisfied with his conduct in regard to Mr. Darby; and would not be persuaded that it was the affluence of his opposers, and not his doubts about the cause, that prevented his engaging in it. Mr. Woodford, taking advantage of the faith his sister reposed in him as understanding business, had so harassed her with representations of Orlando's neglect, the inexperience of Carr, and the want of skill in the counsel he employed, that Mrs. Somerive now often pressed him to leave the management of the whole to his uncle, and to withdraw it from Carr; and wearied by these importunities, and by the delays which the adverse party seemed determined still to contrive, Orlando was

sometimes

ſometimes half tempted to give up the purſuit, and, with the little money he yet had left, to retire to ſome remote village, where, wholly unknown, he might work at any certain, though laborious buſineſs, for the ſupport of his wife and child:—but, when he ſaw the tears that his mother ſhed in ſpeaking to him of his brother Philip, who had entirely deſerted his family, after having, as far as he could, undone it, he could not determine to plunge her into equal, perhaps greater uneaſineſs on his account; and he then reſolved rather to ſuffer any pain himſelf, than to fail in thoſe duties which he felt he ought to fulfil.

It was in one of the moſt melancholy moods, which the increaſing difficulties of his ſituation inſpired, that Orlando, ſitting alone in the little dining-room of his lodgings, when Monimia's indiſpoſition confined her to her bed, that he compoſed a little ode to Poverty, which he had hardly put upon paper, when Carr came in, to whom he careleſsly ſhewed it. Carr, who had a taſte for poetry, deſired a copy of it;

to which Orlando replied, "that he was too idle to copy it, but that he might have the original, for he ſhould himſelf perhaps never look at it again." Carr put it into his pocket, and, aſking "if he might do what he would with it?" Orlando anſwered, "Yes," and thought no more about it.

Carr had often told Orlando, as they talked over his ſituation together, "that he had literary talents, which might be employed to advantage;" and he ſaid, "he ſhould get acquainted with ſome of the writers of the day, who were the moſt eſteemed, or at leaſt the moſt faſhionable, who would help him into notice."

"Nay," ſaid Orlando, "if what I write will not help me into notice, I am afraid, my friend, the trade of authorſhip, which will not do without recommendation, will be but little worth following."

"It is not certainly," replied his friend, "the very beſt trade that can be followed in any way, but yet is not ſo deſpicable as you ſuppoſe:—for example, if you could write a play now, and get it received by

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the managers; and if it should be successful . . . ."

"Dear Carr," cried Orlando, "how many ifs are here!—I have no dramatic talents; nor, if I had, do I know one of the managers; or could I conquer, by dint of attendance, the difficulties which, I have heard you say, they throw in the way of authors—I should probably not be successful."

"And yet," said Carr, "there have been very successful authors, who have not the natural turn to poetry which you seem to me to have; indeed, who have none; but who have contrived, by bringing together a few scenes without any plot, a scattering of equivocal expressions, and some songs (which, being set to pretty music, we do not discover are not even rhyme), have really had wonderful success; and those who have succeeded once, get into fashion, and succeed in a second piece, because they have done so in the first."

"They must, however," said Orlando,

" have more genius than you are willing to allow them,"

" You ſhall judge, if you will," ſaid Carr, " of them, as far as converſation will enable you to judge.—A relation of mine is a conſtant attendant at the converſations of one of our celebrated authoreſſes—I have ſometimes gone thither with him, and have been often invited to go, ſince my firſt introduction, either with him, alone, or with any literary friend. The lady is never ſo well pleaſed as when her room is crowded with men, who either are, or fancy they are men of genius. She profeſſes to dote upon, to adore genius in our ſex; though, in her own, ſhe will hardly allow it to any body but herſelf."

Orlando heſitated, at firſt, whether it was worth while to give up Monimia's company for an evening, for the ſake of being introduced into this ſociety, of which he did not form any very great expectations; but Carr, who ſaw how much his ſpirits were depreſſed, urged him to try the experiment. " The aſſembly is not, I own,"

ſaid

said he, " the very firſt of the kind in London; for, to the firſt, neither my relation or I have any chance of being admitted; but, I aſſure you, the lady of whom I ſpeak is celebrated for her wit, and for the novelty of her poetry, if not for that of her plays; and you will find ſome people there, who may be worth being acquainted with."

Orlando then conſented to go on the following Friday, and Carr attended him accordingly.

He was introduced to a little ill-made woman, with a pale complexion, pitted with the ſmall-pox; two defects which her attachment to literature did not prevent her from taking all poſſible pains to conceal: there was in her air a conviction of ſelf-conſequence, which predominated over the tender languor ſhe affected—Indeed it was towards the gentlemen only that this ſoft ſenſibility was apparently exhibited: Ladies, and eſpecially thoſe who had any pretence to thoſe acquirements in which ſhe believed herſelf to excel, were ſeldom

or never admitted; and ſhe profeſſed to hold them in contempt.

Though no longer young, ſhe believed herſelf ſtill an object of affection and admiration; and that the beauties of her mind were irreſiſtible to all men of taſte.—They were indeed of a ſingular caſt: but as there are collectors of grotesque drawings, and books, no otherwiſe valuable than becauſe they are old; ſo there were minds who contemplated hers with ſome degree of admiration; who thought her verſes were really poetry, and that her dramas (the productions of writers of the ſixteenth and ſeventeenth centuries modernized) had really merit. As ſhe was by no means inſenſible to perfection, if it appeared in the form of a young man, ſhe was immediately ſtruck with the figure and addreſs of Orlando; and, amidſt the ſomething which was called wit and literary converſation that now began, ſhe addreſſed herſelf particularly to him—enquired into his ſtudies, and his taſte in poetry—beſought him to favour her with ſome of his productions, and ſeemed diſpoſed

difpofed to elect him to emulate, if not to rival, the Florios and Philanders with whom fhe held a tender correfpondence in the news-papers.

Orlando, naturally of a gay temper, and eafily feizing the ridiculous, entered at once into this fingular character; and before he had been half an hour in the company of this modern Centlivre, fhe declared in a loud whifper to Carr, whom fhe beckoned acrofs the room to come to her, "that he was the moft divine creature fhe had ever converfed with." A gentleman was now announced by the name of Mr. Lorrain, at whofe arrival the lady of the houfe expreffed great pleafure; and faid to Orlando, "Oh, Mr. Somerive! I fhall now have an opportunity of introducing you to one of the moft fublime geniufes of the age—a man of the warmeft fancy, of the moft exquifite wit."—Orlando looked towards the door where this phænomenon was expected to enter, and faw, to his utter aftonifhment, a gentleman who feemed to him to be—Warwick.

He remained riveted to his chair, gazing on the ſtranger, who approached the lady of the houſe without noticing her gueſts. After he had however paid her ſome very extravagant compliments on her looks, and received her anſwers, which were deſigned to be at once tender and ſpirited, ſhe deſired to introduce him to a newly-acquired friend of hers; and Mr. Lorrain, turning his eyes to the young man who ſat next her, diſcovered immediately, by the wonder expreſſed in his looks, that in this new acquaintance of hers, he had found an old acquaintance of his own.

A few confuſed words were all that either the one or the other was at firſt able to utter. Orlando, not much pleaſed with a change of name, which he thought boded no good to his ſiſter, enquired very earneſtly after her:—his brother-in-law, in increaſed confuſion, which he ſeemed endeavouring to conquer, anſwered, "that ſhe was well;" and then, as he found Orlando in no humour to connive at the deception, which for ſome reaſon or other he choſe to

practice,

practice, as to his name and situation, he took him by the arm, and begged he would walk with him to the other end of the room, where he told him, in a hurried way, "that he was but lately come to England, after a variety of distresses, and being afraid of his creditors, and for other reasons which he would hereafter give him, he had changed his name for the present;" of which he desired him not to speak in the company they were then in. "But my sister, Sir," said Orlando, "where is my sister?—has *she* too changed her name?"—"Of course," replied Warwick, who seemed hurt at the vehemence with which he spoke.—"Well, Sir; but by whatever name you choose to have her called, you will allow me immediately to see her—Is she in town?"

"Yes," replied Warwick coldly; "here is a card that will direct you to her—All I request is your silence this evening in regard to my change of name; a matter that surely cannot be material to any one here."

Orlando assented to this, and they re-

turned together towards Mrs. Manby, the lady of the houſe, to whom Warwick, aſſuming again the name of Lorrain, ſaid, in a careleſs way, "that he now owed her another obligation, by having been introduced by her means, to an old friend, for whom, ever ſince his arrival in London, he had been enquiring in vain." The converſation then became general. Some other viſitors arrived, ſome departed; and Orlando, impatient to have ſome private converſation with Warwick, aſked "if he would accompany him and his friend Carr?"—To this he aſſented; but Mrs. Manby would not releaſe them till they had promiſed to viſit her again the following week.

Carr, as ſoon as he learned from Orlando who Warwick really was, took leave of him, under pretence of buſineſs in another part of the town; and as the evening was fine, Orlando and his brother-in-law walked homewards together.

As ſoon as they were alone, the former expreſſed his ſurpriſe at meeting thus unexpectedly

expectedly, and under another name, one who had so long been given up for lost; and his still greater wonder, that it was possible for his sister to be in London, without having seen or made any enquiry after her mother and sisters, or her family.

"Suspend your astonishment, Somerive," said Warwick, "or at least suspend your blame: when you hear all we have suffered, and all we have contended with, you will find at least no occasion for the latter; and though I own it appears extraordinary that my wife has not yet sought her family, that circumstance will seem less so, when you know that it is not above three weeks since we came out of Scotland; and that, after our long detention in America, we returned to Europe, without being able to return to England—and have been in Spain, in Portugal, in Ireland, and at length in Scotland.—When I can relate to you in detail all these adventures *, you will find more to pity, than to reproach us for."

"But, my dear Warwick," said Orlando,

* Which may perhaps appear in a detached work.

who already forgave what he had before thought there was cauſe to reſent, "will not our Iſabella ſee her mother now?—Will not ſhe give this inexpreſſible comfort to a tender parent, who has never ceaſed to regret her loſs?"

"You muſt ſettle that with her, my friend, to-morrow, when I beg you will breakfaſt with us. Your ſiſter has two little boys to preſent to you, and will be delighted I know to ſee you, but it muſt not be without ſome preparation." Orlando promiſed to be with them at breakfaſt; and on Warwick's expreſſing a wiſh to hear how he was himſelf ſituated, he gave a brief detail of all that had happened from their laſt parting at Rayland Hall to the preſent time.

Warwick heard him with attention, and then ſaid, "So, my dear boy! it does not appear that thy piety has ſucceeded better than my raſhneſs:—I have been diſinherited and bedeviled by my uncle for marrying a girl I liked—and you, who ſacrificed your own inclinations to your virtue,

have been diſinherited, for theſe orthodox fellows in their cauliflower wigs and ſhort aprons—Why, you could not have been worſe ſerved, if you had taken off your little nymph with you to America, as I took off mine."

"Yes, ſurely," replied Orlando, "I ſhould have been worſe off; for I ſhould not have what is now, and will be, in whatever extremity I may be, my greateſt conſolation, the conſciouſneſs that I have never, to gratify myſelf, given pain to thoſe who had a claim to my duty; and that if I am unfortunate, I have at leaſt not deſerved my ill fortune."

"Bravo! cried Warwick—

"'Tis not in mortals to command ſucceſs;
"But we'll do more, Sempronius—we'll deſerve it."

I wiſh you joy, my young Cato; but for my part, I find I have no qualms of conſcience about bilking the old boy in Groſvenor Place—I rather think I have done him a kindneſs, and perhaps one day or other he may find it out."

"In the mean time, however, I ſuppoſe General Tracy remains inexorable."

"Faith!" anſwered Warwick, "I have never tried; and one reaſon of my taking another name was, that he might not know I was in England."

They were now arrived at a ſtreet where, as Warwick's lodgings were near Leiceſter Square, and thoſe of Orlando in a ſtreet near Oxford ſtreet, it was neceſſary for them to part for the evening. Orlando, whoſe affection for Iſabella was already revived, ſent her a thouſand kind remembrances; and Warwick, in return, told him, "he longed to be introduced to the nymph of the inchanted tower," whom he never had an opportunity of ſeeing at Rayland Hall. Orlando, after he had left him, conſidered with aſtoniſhment the volatility of his temper.—His perſon was a little altered by change of climate; but his ſpirits were not at all depreſſed by a change of ſituation ſo great as between being the heir of General Tracy, and a wandering adventurer, for he did not conceal from his friend that

 ſuch

ſuch was his preſent ſituation ; that it was in conſequence of his having written ſomething for the news-papers, that he had become acquainted with Mrs. Manby, who had anſwered them ; and that he was now ſoliciting the managers to accept of a play he had finiſhed. The humiliating attendance which he owned this purſuit ſeemed likely to render neceſſary, was added to the reaſons he had already given Orlando why he wiſhed to be known at preſent only as Mr. Lorrain.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

ON his return home, Orlando related to his wife his extraordinary meeting with Warwick; and though he expreſſed great delight in knowing that his ſiſter was living and well, he could not but feel concern for the ſituation in which he found her. He knew not whether Warwick did not, notwithſtanding his apparent gaiety and careleſſneſs, repent him of his precipitate marriage; and he feared, that, by a man of ſo volatile a temper, the evils of narrow circmmſtances would not be ſoftened to Iſabella.

He haſtened to her the next morning, and ſhe received him with blended emotions of joy and diſtreſs particularly affecting. It was not till ſome time after Warwick left them together, that Iſabella had courage to aſk the circumſtances of her father's

ther's death; yet ſhe was conſoled by hearing, that *her* elopement did not appear to have haſtened it. Orlando then entreated her to determine on ſeeing her mother immediately, and ſhe left it to him to manage it as he would. He embraced her two lovely children with affection, and could not behold them, without repreſenting to her how neceſſary it was to think of ſome means to reconcile Warwick to General Tracy.

Iſabella anſwered, "that they had come to London with that intention; but that Warwick's pride, and his uncle's having certainly made a will in favour of his brother's ſon, had combined to throw difficulties in the way of a reconciliation; and ſhe now deſpaired of Warwick's purſuing his hopes of it, or of their being crowned with ſucceſs if he did.—His change of name," ſhe ſaid, "had been made partly to avoid his creditors, who now believed him dead, till he could find means of paying them; and partly that General Tracy might not be informed of his being in London, till he

could

could know whether there was a likelihood of his being forgiven." The vivacity of Iſabella ſeemed ſubdued, but ſhe was not dejected; and after ſhe had wept over the account of her father's death, her brother's miſconduct, and the diſperſion of her family, ſhe recovered ſome degree of cheerfulneſs, and ſeemed to prepare herſelf for an interview with her mother, with more reſolution than, from all that had happened, Orlando thought it poſſible for her to aſſume.

This formidable meeting was fixed for the next day; and when Orlando left his ſiſter, he began to conſider if he might not, at the ſame time, acknowledge his own marriage, and put an end, at once, to the ſtate of uneaſineſs, and conſciouſneſs of violated integrity which he now was in.

When he rapped at his own door, he was told by the maid who opened it, "that the porter whom he ſaw in the paſſage had been waiting for him ſome time with a letter, which he was directed to deliver into no hands but his own." He opened it with precipitation,

precipitation, and found these words written in a hand hardly legible:

"Dear Orlando,

"If my having left you so long ignorant of what is become of me, has not entirely estranged you from me—come to me at the place the bearer will shew you, and perhaps it will be the last trouble you will ever receive from

"Yours,

"P. Somerive."

Orlando, shocked and surprised, enquired of the man, who stood by, "where he had left the gentleman who sent him?"—The man replied, "that he had orders not to answer, but to shew him the way:—that the gentleman was ill in bed, and given over by the doctor." Still more alarmed by this account, he bade the man wait a moment, while he went up to speak to Monimia, in order to account for his being so much longer absent, and then hastened with

with his conductor to an obscure street, leading from the Strand to Covent Garden; where, in an attic room, very dirty and very ill furnished, Orlando found his unhappy brother, in an illness which seemed to be the last stage of a rapid decline, brought on by debauchery and excess.

It might give too tragic a colouring to the conclusion of this narrative, were the scenes of some days to be minutely described—it may therefore suffice to state, that Orlando could not conceal from his mother the situation of her eldest son, who, conscious of his approaching end, and conscious too of all his offences towards her, implored her pity and forgiveness. In his repentance, however late, his mother forgot his errors, and as solicitously tried to save him as if he had never offended her.—With difficulty he was removed to her own house, where she constantly attended him, with Orlando, and where there were for some days, hopes of his recovery.—It was in this interval that Orlando, who could not bear to be so constantly separated from

Monimia,

Monimia, and whofe heart continually reproached him with the deception he was guilty of towards his mother, concerted with Selina the means of declaring both his marriage, and the return of Ifabella to London. Mrs. Somerive, on the point of lofing one of her children, embraced, with tranfport, the daughter fhe had fo long believed loft; and though fhe trembled for the confequence of Orlando's marriage, when there feemed fo little probability of his finding a fupport for a family, fhe acknowledged that Monimia, of whom fhe foon became paffionately fond, was an apology for his indifcretion. With the tendereft affiduity, Monimia fhared the fatigue of attending on the dying brother of her hufband; and in defpite of the remonftrances and difpleafure of Mr. Woodford, who did all he could to irritate his fifter againft Orlando, and who mingled the pecuniary favours which fhe was obliged to owe him, with admonitions and reproaches that deftroyed all their value, Mrs. Somerive not only forgave Orlando, but feemed to

love him more fondly than ever. That cruel want of money, which too often divides families, and eftranges even the child from the parent, ferved only to unite this family more clofely. The pride of Warwick alone kept him at a greater diftance than the reft; and unable, under his prefent circumftances, to appear as he once did, he could not bear to appear at all before thofe, who had once feen him fo differently fituated. He avoided therefore going to the houfe, when he thought there was a probability of his meeting any of the Woodford family; none of them indeed but Woodford himfelf were very likely to be there; but from him Warwick would have flown with more apprehenfion than from the reft, not only on account of his coarfe jokes, but becaufe of his connection with General Tracy.

But Ifabella, though equally defirous of efcaping the unfeeling raillery or cold remonftrance of her uncle, was, without meeting him, conftantly with her family, and was, with Monimia and Selina, the fup-

port

port of the unhappy Mrs. Somerive, when, after lingering about a fortnight after his removal, her eldeſt ſon expired in the arms of Orlando.

There is a degree of folly, and of vice, which gradually diſſolves the tendereſt affections, weans the friend from the beloved companion of youth, and renders the ties of blood the moſt galling and inſupportable chains To this point of irreclaimable miſconduct Philip Somerive had long ſince arrived. He had too plainly evinced, that to his own ſelfiſh gratifications he would always ſacrifice the welfare, and even the ſubſiſtence of his family; yet, in his repentance on the bed of pain and languor, his mother forgot and forgave all ſhe had ſuffered from him; and when he died, ſhe wept for him as the child of her early affection, whoſe birth and infancy had once formed her greateſt felicity.—In ſhedding tears over an object once ſo beloved by her huſband, ſhe ſeemed a ſecond time to have loſt him; and the firſt ſubject to which ſhe attended, was to have his remains de-

poſited

posited with those of his father, in the family vault at West Wolverton.

In this Orlando determined that she should at all events be gratified, whatever inconvenience might in their present narrow circumstances arise from the expence: he gave therefore directions accordingly; when he found that Mr. Woodford took upon him to oppose this wish of his mother, in a way so rude and savage, that after very high words had passed between him and his uncle (in which Woodford reproached Orlando with all the pecuniary favours he had bestowed upon his family, and ridiculed his beggarly marriage), Orlando at the last part of his conversation entirely lost his temper, and desired the unfeeling man of consequence to leave the house.

He had then the additional difficulty of concealing this disagreement from his mother, and of finding the means to supply that deficiency which this cruelty of his uncle would create.—The little sum left of his commission, after paying some late expences of his brother's and for his own

lodgings,

lodgings, was reduced within thirty pounds, in which consisted his whole fortune. His uncle, who had till now contributed yearly to the support of his mother and his sisters, now protested that he would do no more. From his eldest sister married in Ireland, who had a family of her own, very trifling assistance only could be expected; and Warwick could not provide for his own family. Thus Orlando saw, that on an income of hardly an hundred a year, his mother and his two unmarried sisters were to live; and that Monimia and her family, whom he could not think of suffering to be any additional burthen to them, could have no other dependence than on his exertions; yet into what way of life to enter, or where to seek the means of providing for them, he knew not.

Sad were his reflections on the past, on the present, and on the future, when he set out with the melancholy procession that was to convey the remains of his deceased brother to the last abode of the Somerive family; and little was the

correspondence

correſpondence between his internal feelings and the beauty of the ſeaſon, which gave peculiar charms to the country through which he paſſed.—The tears of the family he had left, of which Monimia was during his abſence to be a part, ſeemed to have deprived him of the power of ſhedding a tear; but with eyes that gloomily ſurveyed the objects around him, without knowing what he ſaw, he reached at the cloſe of the ſecond day's journey Weſt Wolverton; and at a little alehouſe, the only one in the village, the funeral ſtopped that night, while Orlando went out alone to direct what yet remained of the neceſſary preparations.

It was a beautiful ſtill evening, towards the end of May; but the ſenſes of the unhappy Orlando were ſhut to all the pleaſures external objects could beſtow.—When he had viſited the church, and ſpoken to the curate, he walked back towards the houſe once his father's. The graſs was grown in the court, and half the windows were bricked up: the greater part of the

ſhrubs

ſhrubs in the garden were cut; and the gates out of repair and broken. All wore an appearance of change and of deſolation, even more deplorable, in the opinion of Orlando, than the ſpruce alterations, and air of new-born proſperity, which, on his former viſit, he had remarked as the effect of Mr. Stockton's purchaſe.

Pain, and even horrors, were grown familiar to Orlando; and he ſeemed to have a gloomy ſatisfaction in the indulgence of his melancholy. He opened, therefore, the half-fallen gate, that led from a ſort of lawn, that ſurrounded the houſe, to the ſhrubbery and pleaſure ground, and entered the walk which he had ſo often traverſed with his father, and where he had taken his laſt leave of him on his departure for America. —The moon, not yet at its full, ſhed a faint light on every object: he looked along a ſort of viſta of ſhrubs, which ſeemed to have been left merely becauſe they were not yet wanted as firing; and the moonlight, at the end of this dark avenue of cypreſs and gloomy evergreens, ſeemed ...

tially to illuminate the walk, only to ſhew him the ſpectre of departed happineſs. He remembered with what pleaſure his father uſed to watch the growth of theſe trees, which he had planted himſelf; and with what ſatisfaction he was accuſtomed to conſider them, as improving for Philip.—Sad reverſe!—The father, who thus fondly planned future ſchemes of felicity for his ſon, long ſince mouldered in the grave, whither that ſon himſelf, after having been but too acceſſary to the premature death of this fond parent, was now, in the bloom of life, precipitated by his own headlong folly.

A temper ſo ſanguine as that of Orlando, poſſeſſes alſo that ſenſibility which arms with redoubled poignancy the ſhafts of affliction and diſappointment. He felt, with cruel acuteneſs, all the calamities which a few ſhort years had brought upon his family:—all their hopes blaſted—their fortune gone—their name almoſt forgotten in the country—and ſtrangers poſſeſſing their habitations. He now remembered that he

ufed to think, that, were he once bleffed with Monimia, every other circumftance of life would be to him indifferent; yet fhe was now his—fhe was more beloved, as his wife, than fhe had ever been as his miftrefs; and the fweetnefs of her temper, the excellence of her heart, the clearnefs of her underftanding, and her tender attachment to him, rendered her infinitely dearer to him than that beauty which had firft attracted his early love. But far from being rendered indifferent to every other circumftance, he felt that much of his prefent concern arofe from the impoffibility he found of fheltering his adored creature from the evils of indigence; and that the romantic theory, of facrificing every confideration to love, produced, in the practice, only the painful confcioufnefs of having injured its object.

It was late before the unhappy wanderer returned to the place where he was to attempt to fleep; but the mournful ceremony of the next day, added to the gloomy thoughts he had been indulging, deprived

him of all inclination to repofe; and as he faw the fun arife which was to witnefs the interment of his brother—how different appeared its light now, from what it ufed to do, when from the fame village, in the houfe of his father, he beheld it over the eaftern hills, awakening him to hope and health—to the fociety of a happy cheerful family—and to the profpect of meeting his little Monimia, then a child, who innocently expreffed the delight fhe felt in feeing him!

But to indulge thefe painful reflections appeared to him unmanly, while they were likely to difable him from the exercife of the melancholy duties before him. Thefe at length over, he found himfelf, in defpite of all his philofophy, fo much depreffed, that he could not determine to return that night towards London; but fending away the undertaker's people, and retaining for himfelf the horfe on which one of them had rode, he refolved to pafs the reft of the day in gratifying the ftrange inclination he had long felt, to wander about Rayland Park,

to viſit the Hall, and take a laſt leave of that ſcene of his early happineſs, the turret once inhabited by Monimia.

This plan would detain him from her another day; but he felt an invincible inclination to make this farewel viſit, which he knew Monimia herſelf would wiſh him to indulge. Having therefore diſengaged himſelf from the gloomy duties of the day, and ſent a few lines to his mother and Monimia, to account for his abſence, if the man who carried it ſhould arrive in town before him, he ſet out towards evening for the Hall, flattering himſelf that, as he was now known, and made a better appearance than on his former viſit, he ſhould without difficulty obtain admittance to the houſe.—In this, however, he was miſtaken: he found many of the windows bricked up; the œconomy of the preſent poſſeſſors not allowing them to pay ſo heavy a window tax: the old ſervants hall below was entirely deprived of light; and hardly a veſtige remained of inhabitants, in the graſs-grown courts and ſilent deſerted offices.

Orlando, after waiting for some time at the door, before he could make any one hear, saw at length the same sturdy clown he had before spoken to, who asked him in a surly tone his business.—Orlando replied, that he desired to be allowed to see the house. The man answered, that he had positive orders from Dr. Hollybourn to shew the house to nobody; and he shut the door in his face.

Thus repulsed, Orlando only felt a more determined resolution to gratify himself by a visit to the library, the chapel, and the turret; and he went round the house with an intention to enter without permission by the door that opened near the former out of the summer parlour—Here, however, he was again disappointed; this door, as well as the windows in the same line with it, was nailed up, and boarded on the inside; and while Orlando, thus baffled, was examining the other wing of the house, to see if he could not there obtain entrance, the man who guarded it looked from a window above, and told him, that if any body was seen

about

about the houſe he ſhould fire at th[illegible] for that "nobody had no buſineſs there."

From the ſavage brutality of his manner, Orlando had little doubt but that he would act as he ſaid; yet, far from fearing his fire-arms, he told him that he would ſee the houſe at all events, and that oppoſition would only ſerve to give more trouble, but not deter him from his purpoſe. He then attempted to bribe this guardian of the property of the church, and offered him a handful of ſilver: but his anſwer was, that he ſhould fetch his blunderbuſs.

Orlando now thought that it would be better to return to Weſt Wolverton, and to write to a lawyer in the neighbourhood, employed by Dr. Hollybourn in the management of the eſtate, requeſting leave to ſee the houſe; though he foreſaw that it would be difficult to make ſuch a man comprehend the ſort of ſenſations that urged him to this requeſt—and that it was poſſible he might impute his deſire of viſiting the Hall to motives that might make him refuſe his permiſſion.—Reſolved however to try, he

returned ſlowly and diſconſolate through the park; and obſerved, as he reached the ſide of it next the lake, that in the copſe that clothed the hill many of the large trees were felled, and ſome others marked for the axe.—His heart became more heavy than before; and when he reached the ſeat near the boat-houſe in the fir-wood, which was now indeed broken down, he reſted a moment againſt the old tree it had once ſurrounded, to recover from the almoſt inſupportable deſpondence which oppreſſed him.

Abſorbed in the moſt melancholy thoughts, every object ſerved to increaſe their bitterneſs—He liſtened to ſounds once ſo pleaſing with anguiſh of heart bordering upon deſpair, and almoſt wiſhed that he had been drowned in this water when a boy, by the accident of falling from a boat as he was fiſhing on the lake, from whence his father's ſervant had with difficulty ſaved him.

In ſuch contemplations he remained for ſome time, with his eyes fixed on the water, when

when he faw reflected in its furface the image of fome object moving along its bank.—The figure, from the gentle waving of the water as it approached the fhore, was not diftinct; and its motion fo flow and fingular, that the curiofity of Orlando was fomewhat awaked. As it came nearer to him, therefore, he ftepped forward, and faw advancing with difficulty on his crutches the old beggar whom he had met in a barn in Hampfhire four months fince, when he waited for communication with Mrs. Roker.

However furprifed Orlando was at the appearance of this perfon, the man himfelf feemed to have expected to meet him; for, advancing towards him as fpeedily as his mutilated frame would allow, he exclaimed, "Ah! my dear mafter! well met: I have found you at laft."

"Have you been looking for me then, my old friend?"

"Aye, marry have I—and many a weary mile have my leg and my crutches hopped after your honour—Why, mun, I've been

up at London after you; and there, at the house where you give me a direction to, I met a Neger man, who would not believe, like a smutty-faced son of a b——h as he is, that such a poor cripple as I could have to do to speak with you—and so all I could get of him was telling me that you were come down here—I knows this country well enough; and so I e'en set off, and partly one way, and partly another, I got down and have found you out."

Orlando, not guessing why this wandering veteran had taken so much trouble—was about, however, to ask what he could do for him, when the old man, putting on an arch look, and feeling in the patched pocket of what had once been a coat, said—

"And so now, master, since we be met, I hopes with all my heart I brings you good news—There—There's a letter for you from Madam Roker—A power of trouble, and many a cold night's waiting I had to get it: but let an old soldier alone—Egad, when once I had got it, I was bent upon

putting

putting it into no hands but yours, for fear of more tricks upon travellers."

Orlando, in greater emotion than a letter from ſuch a lady was likely to produce, took it, and unfolding two or three dirty papers in which it was wrapped, he broke the ſeal, and read theſe words:

"DEAR SIR,

"I AM ſorry to acquaint you that Mr. Roker is by no means ſo grateful to me as I had reaſon to expect from the good fortune I brought him, and indeed from his aſſurances when I married him of his great regard and affection for me. I cannot but ſay that I am cruelly treated at preſent. As to Mr. Roker, he paſſes all his time in London, and I have too much cauſe to fear that very wicked perſons are enjoying too much of the money which is mine—a thing ſo wicked, that, if it was only for his ſoul's ſake, I cannot but think it my duty to prevent: but, to add to my misfortune herein, his relations give out that I am *non compos mentis*; which to be ſure I might be rec-

koned when I beftowed my fortune on fuch an undeferving family, and made fuch facrifices for Mr. Roker, as I am now heartily forry for.—Sir, I have read in Scripture, that it is never too late to repent; and I am fure, if I have done you a great injury, I do repent it from the bottom of my foul, and will make you all the reparation in my power: and you may believe I am in earneft in my concern, when I hereby truft you with a fecret, whereon perhaps my life may depend: for, befides that I don't know how far I might be likely to be punifhed by law for the unjuft thing Mr. Roker perfuaded me to confent to—againft my confcience I am fure—I know that he would rather have me dead than to fpeak the truth; and 'tis for that reafon, for fear I fhould be examined about the will of my late friend, Mrs. Rayland, that he infifts upon it I am at this time a lunatic, and keeps me under clofe confinement as fuch.

"Oh! Mr. Orlando, there is a later will than that which was proved, and which gave away from you all the Rayland eftate

—and

—and with shame and grief I say, that when my Lady died I read that copy of it she gave to me; and finding that I had only half as much as in a former will, I was over-persuaded by Mr. Roker, who had too much power over me, to produce only the other, and to destroy in his presence that copy which my Lady had given to me to keep, charging me to send it, if any thing happened to her, to your family.—I did not then know the contents, which she had always kept from me: and I am sure I should never have thought of doing as I did but for Mr. Roker—I hope the Lord will forgive me!—and that you, dear Sir, will do so likewise, since I have not only been sincerely repentant of the same, but have, luckily for us both, kept it in my power to make you, I hope, reparation.

"After the decease of my late dear Lady, Mr. Roker had the other will proved; and Dr. Hollybourn and he agreed together in all things. Mr. Roker, to whom I was married, was very eager after every box of papers, and almost every scrap belonging

to

to Mrs. Rayland; but I thought him, even in those early days, a little too much in a hurry to take possession of all the jewels and rings, and effects, of which I had the care; and did not see why, as they were mostly mine, I should give them entirely up to him; seeing that I had already given him my fortune—and that such things belong to a woman, and in no case to her husband.—This being the case, I own, I did not put into his hands some of these things, nor a small rose-wood box of my Lady's, in which she always kept some lockets, and miniature pictures, and medals, and other such curiosities, and some family papers. Mr. Roker never saw this box, nor did I ever have the keys of it, for there are two belonging to it with a very particular lock; my late Lady always kept them in her purse; and it was only after her decease that they came into my possession; and thereupon opening the box, which Mr. Roker knew nothing of, I found a paper sealed up and dated in my Lady's own hand, and indorsed —"Duplicate of my last Will and Testament,

ment, to be delivered to Orlando Somerive, or his Representative."—I assure you that I had repented me before of the thing I had done in destroying the will, and now resolved to keep it in my power always to make you amends, by taking care of this; which I, knowing I could not do so if I had it in my own possession, put therefore into this box again, with the medals and family papers, and some jewels of no great value, but which I thought would be no harm to make sure of—because, as the proverb observes, things are in this world uncertain at best; and we all know where we eat our first bread, but none can tell where they shall eat their last. Mr. Roker was at that time a fond and affectionate husband; but men are but fickle, even the very best, and none can tell what may befall; by bad people especially, who are so wicked to meddle and interfere between man and wife, to destroy all matrimonial comfort, as is too often the case.

"Mr. Roker thought then of residing at the

the Hall as steward for the Bishop, &c.; but Dr. Hollybourn not being agreeable thereto, it was settled otherwise: only Mr. Roker and I were to go once a year to the Court holding for Manors, and to overlook the premises till they were disposed of, according to the will of my Lady which was proved, which the worthy Divines seemed not to be in a great hurry to do—Whereupon, as I did not choose for many reasons to carry this small box about with me, I put it into a place of safety in the house.

"If you have not forgot old times, Mr. Orlando, you know very well that Rayland Hall, which belonged to such famous cavaliers in the great rebellion, has a great many secret stair-cases, and odd passages, and hiding-places in it; where, in those melancholy times, some of my late Lady's ancestors, who had been in arms for the blessed Martyr and King, Charles the Second, were hid by others of the family after the fight at Edgehill, &c.—which I have heard my Lady oftentimes recount:

 but,

but, neverthelefs, I do not know that fhe herfelf knew all thofe places.

"By the fide of my bed, in that chamber hung partly with fcarlet and gold printed leather, and partly with painting in pannels, where there is a brown mohair bed lined with yellow filk, you may remember a great picture of the Lady Alithea, fecond wife of the firft Sir Hildebrand Rayland, with her two fons and a dog—She was an Earl's daughter, and a celebrated beauty, and great great grandmother to my late Lady. The picture is only a copy from that in the great gallery, and done, as I have heard my Lady fay, by fome painter of that time when he was a young man—fo that, as there was another, this was not hung in the gallery. Clofe under that picture there feems to be a hanging of gilt leather: but this is only faftened with fmall hooks: and under it is a fliding oak board, which gives into a clofet where there is no light—but a very narrow ftair-cafe goes from it through the wall, quite round to the

the other ſide of the houſe, and into other hiding-places, where one or two perſons might be hid for years, and nobody the wiſer.

"Now, Sir, in a ſort of hollow place about three feet wide, made like an arch under the thick wall in this cloſet, is a tin box with a padlock—and in that box this inlaid roſe-wood box or caſket. There you will find the real will of my Lady, and I hope all you wiſh and expect in it; and what I deſire of you in return is, that you will take means to convince the world that I am not to blame; and that I am not a lunatic; and you have ſo much honour, that I rely upon your promiſes not to injure me if it ſhould be in your power; but to make me amends for what I thus loſe for your ſake and the ſake of juſtice—as in your letter you faithfully promiſe.

"For that poor unfortunate young woman, the daughter of my deceaſed kinſwoman, I do aſſure you that, if I knew what was become of her, I would give you notice.

notice. But she has never been heard of that I know of for a great many months—and I am afraid, from her flippant ways with my Mr. Roker before I was forced to send her away, has taken to courses very disgraceful, and which have made her unworthy of your farther thoughts. God forgive me if I judge amiss herein!—We must be charitable one towards another, as the Scripture says, poor sinful mortals, who have so much to answer for ourselves, as to be sure all of us have!

"And now, dear Sir, I take my leave, having been four days writing this long letter by fits and snatches, when Mr. Roker's sister, who even sleeps in my room, has been out of the way; for she watches me like a jailor, and I am quite a prisoner: and have not pen and ink but by stealth. If I were to attempt to send this to the post, all would be lost: so I have trusted it to old Hugh March the beggar, by means of the servant girl, and I have given the old man the three keys! Heartily wishing you health and happiness I recommend myself

to

to your prayers, as mine are for your success, and remain, dear Sir,

Your affectionate humble servant,

RACHEL ROKER."

"P. S. Pray let me hear speedily by the bearer."

Orlando read this strange confession, this avowal of iniquity so black, mingled with appeals to Heaven, and sentences of religion, with such a palpitating heart, that, when he had finished it, he looked around him to discover whether he was alive—The objects about him seemed real—He saw the old man before him, who, after a long search in his other pocket, produced the three keys; and then pulling off the relics of an hat from his grey head, bowed with an air of much humility, and cried, "Well, and what says my young master?—Does his lame messenger bring him bad news or good?—Ah, your honour is a noble gentleman, and will reward your old soldier!"

"That I will, my honest fellow! to the utmost of your wishes, as soon as I have

discovered

diſcovered whether all this is real; but it ſeems to me at preſent that I am in a dream."

"Wide awake, depend upon it," anſwered the beggar;—"ſo come, dear young gentleman! will you go back to yon ale-houſe, and let us ſee what the good news will do for us?—I do not very well know, indeed, what it is; but I know that I was promiſed that you could do me a power of good, if I delivered the letter and the keys ſafe.—You know I had promiſed afore to ſerve you by night and by day, and ſo I have." "Serve me a little longer, my brave old man!" ſaid Orlando; "by preſerving in the place we are going to the ſecrecy I deſire of you, without which all may yet be loſt.—Here, I will ſhare my purſe with you—Go back to the ale-houſe, order whatever you like, and ſhew them that you have money to pay for it.—Do not make uſe of my name, nor ſay a word about Mrs. Roker till I return.—I muſt go to the next town, to conſult a friend I have there on the beſt ſteps to be taken; in

which

which if I ſucceed, I will make thee the very prince of old ſoldiers."

Orlando then put ſome guineas into his hand, and ſaw him take the way to the ale-houſe, leſs rejoiced at his future hopes of reward, than at the power of immediate gratification. He ſomewhat doubted his diſcretion, but thought that a very few hours would put it out of the power of any indiſcretion to mar the happy effects of Mrs. Roker's repentance:—and to ſet about ſecuring this advantage, he haſtened to his friend Dawſon, as he ſaw that too many precautions could not be taken in an affair ſo unuſual and ſo important.

CHAP. XIII.

THE young man to whom Orlando now applied, was very ſincerely his friend, and poſſeſſed an acute and penetrating mind.—He ſaw at once all the importance of the buſineſs, and the hazard Orlando would incur by the ſmalleſt delay. Mrs. Roker's letter evidently expreſſed a mind fluctuating between reſentment towards her huſband, and unwillingneſs to acknowledge the folly ſhe had committed in marrying him; and as no great dependence could be placed on the repentance of a perſon under the influence of ſuch a contrariety of paſſions, there was reaſon to fear that her love, or, what ſhe fancied ſo, her pride, her avarice, and her fear, might unite to conquer the compunction ſhe had ſhewn, and to make her diſcover the ſteps ſhe had taken to her huſband.

Dawſon

Dawſon adviſed therefore an immediate application to a juſtice of peace, for a warrant to ſearch the houſe that night; and as there was none reſident in the town, Orlando ſet out with him in a poſt-chaiſe for the houſe of a magiſtrate, about ſeven miles diſtant, who had formerly been much acquainted with the Somerive family, and had been always full of profeſſions of regard for them.

To this man, now in much higher affluence than formerly, by the acquiſition of the fortunes of ſome of his relations, Dawſon opened the buſineſs on which they came.

But here he had occaſion to remark the truth of that obſervation *, which, whoever has ſeen many viciſſitudes of fortune, muſt have too often beheld, as a melancholy evidence of the depravity of our nature, "That in the misfortunes of our beſt friends, there is ſomething not diſpleaſing to us."—Far from appearing to rejoice at the probability which now offered itſelf,

* Of La Rochefoucault.

that

that the ſon of his old friend would be reſtored to the right of his anceſtors, and from depreſſing indigence be raiſed to high proſperity, this gentleman ſeemed to take pains to throw difficulties in his way:—he doubted the letter from Mrs. Roker; he doubted the legality of his granting a warrant; and it was not till after conſiderable delay, and long agruments, that he was at length prevailed upon to lend to Orlando the aſſiſtance of the civil power, without the immediate exertion of which, it ſeemed poſſible that his hopes might be again baffled.

Orlando was not without apprehenſions, that this worthy magiſtrate might ſend immediate information of what was paſſing to Dr. Hollybourn; and he determined, late as it was, to go to Rayland Hall that night. He ſet forward, therefore, attended by Dawſon, two other young men of the ſame town, who were eager for his ſucceſs, and the perſons who were to execute the warrant. It was midnight when they arrived at the Hall—All was profoundly ſilent around it, and it had no longer the appear-

ance of an inhabited houſe. The ſummons, however loud, was unanſwered. As the men rapped violently at the old door of the ſervants hall, the ſullen ſounds murmured through the empty courts, and to their call only hollow echoes were returned. Theſe attempts to gain admittance were repeated again and again without effect, and they began to conclude, that there was nobody within the houſe; but at length ſome of them going round to another part of the houſe, the man who had the charge of it looked out of a window, and demanded their buſineſs.

Upon hearing there was a warrant and a conſtable, the fellow, who had deeply engaged in the ſame ſort of buſineſs as that which uſed to be carried on by Pattenſon and Company, imagined immediately that he had been informed againſt: but as there was no remedy, he came down with fear and trembling to open the door; and it was a great relief to him to learn, that it was only for a paper, which might occaſion the houſe to change its maſter, but not for any

of his effects that the intended ſearch was to be made. The poſſe now proceeded to the place indicated by the letter of Mrs. Roker—the conſtable, a moſt magiſterial perſonage, marching by the ſide of Orlando, while Dawſon and his friends followed, with candles in their hands; and as ſilently they aſcended the great ſtair-caſe, and traverſed the long dark paſſages that led towards the apartment in queſtion, Orlando could not, amid the anxiety of ſuch a moment, help fancying, that the ſcene reſembled one of thoſe ſo often met with in old romances and fairy tales, where the hero is by ſome ſupernatural means directed to a golden key, which opens an inviſible drawer, where a hand or an head is found ſwimming in blood, which it is his buſineſs to reſtore to the inchanted owner. With a beating heart, however, he ſaw the picture of the Lady Alithea removed, and the ſliding board appears. On entering the cloſet, the tin box, covered with a green cloth, was diſcovered. The key which Orlando poſſeſſed opened it, and the

caſket was within it; which he unlocked, in preſence of all the perſons preſent, and ſaw the important paper, exactly as it had been deſcribed by Mrs. Roker.

He now debated whether he ſhould open it; but at length, with the advice of his friend Dawſon, determined not to do ſo till his arrival in London. Replacing every thing elſe as it was found, and ſecuring the cloſet and the room that led to it, he now haſtened to reward the perſons who had attended him on this ſearch—and without reſting, ſet out poſt with Dawſon for London, where they arrived at nine o'clock the next morning.

Orlando haſtened immediately to the houſe of his mother, with ſenſations very different from thoſe with which he had quitted it.—He found Monimia alone in the dining room, penſively attentive to the two children of Iſabella, who were playing on the carpet.—She received him with that degree of tranſport which ſhewed itſelf in tears; nor could he prevail upon her for a moment or two to be more compoſed, and

to

to anſwer his enquiries after his mother and his ſiſters.—She at length told him, that Mrs. Somerive had been ſo much affected by the viſits her brother had made during his abſence, by his reproaches for her falſe indulgence to both her ſons, and by his total diſlike to the marriage of Orlando (which he had repreſented as the moſt abſurd folly, and as the utter ruin of his nephew) and by the diſpoſition he (Mr. Woodford) ſhewed to withdraw all aſſiſtance from her and her two youngeſt daughters, if ſhe did not wholly with draw all countenance both from Orlando and Iſabella, that Mrs. Somerive was actually ſinking under the pain ſuch repeated inſtances of cruelty had inflicted; and had determined, rather than continue to be obliged to a brother who was capable of thus empoiſoning the favours her circumſtances obliged her to accept, to quit London, diſcharge all but one ſervant, and to retire to ſome cheap part of Wales or Scotland, where the little income ſhe poſſeſſed might be more ſufficient to their ſupport.

Orlando, who felt that ſome precaution was neceſſary, in revealing to Monimia the fortunate reverſe that now preſented itſelf, was conſidering how to begin this propitious diſcovery, when his mother, who eagerly expected him, having learned from the ſervants that he was arrived, ſent down Selina to beg to ſee him.

She put back the curtain as he came into the room; and held out her hand to him, but was unable to ſpeak.—The mournful particulars ſhe expected, which however ſhe had not courage to aſk, filled her heart with bitterneſs, and her eyes with tears.

Orlando, affected by the looks and the pathetic ſilence of his mother, kiſſed with extreme emotion the hand ſhe gave him—He thanked her, after a moment's ſilence, for her goodneſs to Monimia during the few days of his abſence; and entreated her to be in better ſpirits. He then gradually diſcovered to her, by a ſhort and clear relation of what had happened, the aſſurance he now had, which the tranſactions of that evening,

evening would, he hoped, confirm, of a ſpeedy change in their circumſtances.

The heart of Mrs. Somerive, ſo long accuſtomed only to ſorrow and ſolicitude, was no longer ſenſible of thoſe acute feelings which agitate the warm and ſanguine boſom of youth; but to hear that her children, for whom only ſhe wiſhed to live, were likely to be at once reſcued from the indigence which impended over them, and ſecured in affluence and proſperity, could not be heard with calmneſs. At length both herſelf and her ſon acquired compoſure enough to conſider of the proper ſteps to be taken. Every perſon intereſted was ſummoned to attend that evening at the houſe of Mrs Somerive, who found herſelf animated enough to be preſent at the opening of the will, at which all who were ſent for were preſent, except Doctor Hollybourn (who ſent his attorney) and the Rokers. The elder only ſent a proteſt againſt it by his clerk; and the younger thought it ſafer immediately to diſappear.

It was found on the peruſal of this

portant paper, and the codicils belonging to it, that, with the exception of five thousand pounds, and two hundred a-year for her life, to her old companion Lennard, Mrs. Rayland had given every thing she possessed, both real and personal, to Orlando, without any other restriction than settling the whole of the landed estate of the Rayland family on his male heirs, and appropriating a sum of money to purchase the title of a Baronet, and for an act to enable him to take and bear the name and arms of Rayland only.

The subsequent proceedings were easy and expeditious. Against a will so authenticated all opposition was vain; and within three weeks Orlando was put in possession of his estate, and Doctor Hollybourn obliged, with extreme reluctance, not only to deliver up all of which he and his brother had taken into their hands, but to refund the rents and the payments for timber; which operation went to the poor Doctor's heart. There are some men who have such an extreme affection for money, even when it does not belong to them, that they cannot

not determine to part with it when once they get poſſeſſion of it. Of this order was the worthy Doctor; who, with charity and urbanity always in his mouth, had an heart rendered callous by avarice, and a paſſion for the ſwiniſh gratifications of the table, to which the poſſeſſion of Rayland Hall, the gardens and hot-houſes of which he alone kept up, had lately ſo conſiderably contributed, that he could not bear to relinquiſh them; and actually ſuffered ſo much from mortification that he was obliged to go to Bath to cure a bilious illneſs, which vexation and gluttony contributed to bring on.

Orlando loſt no time in reſcuing the unfortunate Mrs. Roker from the hands of her tyrant; who, in order to incapacitate her from giving that teſtimony which he knew was in her power, and with which ſhe often had threatened him, had taken out againſt her a commiſſion of lunacy. It was ſuperſeded on the application of Orlando, who himſelf immediately conducted Mrs. Roker to Rayland Hall; where he put her in poſſeſſion of the apartments ſhe had formerly

formerly occupied; and employed her to ſuperintend, as ſhe was ſtill active and alert, the workmen whom he directed to repair and re-furniſh the houſe, and the ſervants whom he hired to prepare it for the reception of its lovely miſtreſs. He forbore to purſue Roker himſelf, as he might have done; having no pleaſure in revenge, and being rather ſolicitous to give to thoſe he loved future tranquillity, than to avenge on others thoſe paſt misfortunes, which perhaps ſerved only to make him more ſenſible of his preſent felicity.

Fortune, as if weary of the long perſecutions the Somerive family had experienced, ſeemed now reſolved to make them amends by ſhowering her favours upon every branch of it. Warwick had hardly rejoiced a week in the good fortune of Orlando, when he received a ſummons to attend General Tracy; who, quite exhauſted by infirmity, ſaw the end of his life approaching, and ſacrificed his reſentment, which time had already conſiderably weakened. He was not, however, yet able to ſee Iſabella; but his

pride

pride had been alarmed by the accounts he had received of Warwick's diſtreſſed circumſtances, and above all, of his having a play coming forward at one of the theatres; which, though it was to paſs as the work of an unknown young author, with a ſuppoſititious name, was well known to be, and publicly ſpoken of as his. That *his* nephew—that the nephew of an Earl ſhould become an author and write for ſupport, was ſo diſtreſſing to the haughty ſpirit of the old ſoldier, that though he ſaw many examples of the ſame thing in people of equal rank, he could not bear it; and the very means his brother's family took to irritate him againſt Warwick, by informing him of this circumſtance, contributed more than any thing elſe to the reſolution he formed of ſeeing his nephew, and reſtoring him to his favour. Warwick immediately agreed to witdraw his play. His uncle burnt the will by which he had been diſinherited, and died about five months afterwards, bequeathing to his two boys by Iſabella, all his landed eſtates, after their

father,

father, who was to enjoy them, together with his great perſonal property, for his life.

In the mean time the happy Orlando had conducted his lovely wife, his mother and his ſiſters, to Rayland Hall; where, without ſpoiling that look of venerable antiquity for which it was ſo remarkable, he collected within it every comfort and every elegance of modern life. With what grateful tranſports did he now walk with Monimia over the park, and talk with her of their early pleaſures and of their ſevere ſubſequent ſufferings! and how ſenſible did theſe retroſpects render them both of their preſent happineſs!

Orlando was only a few weeks in undiſputed poſſeſſion of his eſtate, before he preſented to each of his ſiſters five thouſand pounds; and to add to his power of gratifying his mother, it happened that very ſoon after his arrival at Rayland Hall Mr. Stockton died, the victim of that intemperance which exorbitant wealth and very little underſtanding had led him into. As he had no children, his very large property was divided among diſtant relations,

his joint-heirs; Carloraine Caſtle was ſold, pulled down by the purchaſer, and the park converted into farms; and in this diviſion of property, the houſe and eſtate at Weſt Wolverton, formerly belonging to the Somerive family, were to be ſold alſo. This his paternal houſe had been inhabited by farmers, under tenants of Stockton, when Orlando's laſt melancholy viſit was paid to it. He now purchaſed it; and putting it as nearly as he could into the ſame ſtate as it was at the death of his father, he preſented it to his mother with the eſtate around it; and thither ſhe went to reſide with her two youngeſt daughters, though they all occaſionally paid viſits to the Hall, particularly Selina, of whom Orlando and his Monimia were equally fond.

Incapable of ingratitude, or of forgetting for a moment thoſe to whom he had once been obliged, Orlando was no ſooner happy in his reſtored fortune, than he thought of the widow of his military friend Fleming. To Fleming himſelf he owed it, that he exiſted at all,—to his widow, that an exiſtence

so preserved, had not been rendered a curse by the estrangement or loss of Monimia.

One of the first uses therefore that he made of his assured prosperity, was, to remove from this respectable protectress of his beloved Monimia, the mortifications and inconveniencies of very narrow circumstances. He wrote to her, entreating to see her at the Hall with her children, and that she would stay there at least till after the accession of happiness he was to expect in the autumn. Towards the middle of September, Mrs. Fleming and her younger children arrived; and in a few days afterwards Monimia's gallant young friend the sailor, to whom she owed her providential introduction to Mrs. Fleming, unexpectedly made his appearance. He returned from a very successful cruize; he was made a lieutenant, and had obtained leave of absence for ten days, to comfort with these tidings the heart of his widowed mother; when, not finding her at her usual habitation in the New Forest, he had followed her to Rayland Hall, where he was a most welcome guest

This

This young man, who was in difpofition and in figure the exact reprefentative of his father, could not long be infenfible of the charms of the gentle Selina; and he fpoke to Orlando of the affection he had conceived for her, with his natural fincerity. Orlando, who never felt the value of what he poffeffed, fo much as when it enabled him to contribute to the happinefs of his friends, feized with avidity an offer which feemed fo likely to conftitute that of his beloved fifter; and he had the happinefs in a few days of difcovering that the old fea officer, Fleming's relation and patron, was fo well pleafed with his gallant behaviour in the engagement he had lately been in, that he had determined to make him his heir, and moft readily confented to make a fettlement upon him more than adequate to the fortune Orlando had given his fifter; and it was fettled that Selina and Lieutenant Fleming fhould in a few months be united.

Orlando was very foon after made completely happy by the birth of a fon, to whom he gave his own name, and who

feemed

seemed to render his charming mother yet more dear to all around her. Every ſubſequent hour of the lives of Orlando and his Monimia was marked by ſome act of beneficence; and happy in themſelves and in their connections, their gratitude to Heaven for the extenſive bleſſings they enjoyed, was ſhewn in contributing to the cheerfulneſs of all around them.

In the number of thoſe who felt the ſunſhine of their proſperity, and prayed for its continuance, no individual was more ſincere in his joy, or more fervent in repeated expreſſions of it, than the uſeful old military mendicant, whoſe ſingular ſervices Orlando rewarded by making him the tenant for life of a neat and comfortable lodge in his park —an arrangement that gratified both the dependent and his protector.—Orlando never paſſed through his own gate without being agreeably reminded, by the grateful alacrity of this contented ſervant, of his paſt afflictions, and his preſent felicity.

F I N I S.

